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# JAPAN

BY

JOHN L. STODDARD

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# JAPAN

THE most important dramas of the coming century will probably be enacted on the shores of the Pacific.

Neither the European coast, nor yet our own, can now materially change; but over the mightiest ocean on our globe new constellations have arisen. Another Oriental horoscope must now be cast. Dormant so long, the East is re-awakening from her sleep of ages. Russia, the grim Colossus of the North,—facing, Janus-like, both east and west,—is making there a depot for her navy. Meantime she pushes on by day and by night her trans-Siberian railway, whose bars of steel will soon unite the Baltic and Pacific and revolutionize the commerce of the world. In the Northern Pacific, England and France have interests which are steadily increasing. Southward, Australia, and New Zealand too, must be considered carefully in any forecast of the future. Last, but not least, our own Pacific coast, with its magnificent shore-front of California and Alaska, and the boundless possibilities of Puget Sound, will fifty years hence have enormous interests



PRINCE ITO.

at stake. Meanwhile, Japan, central to all these various lands, keen, bold, and active, both in war and peace, has suddenly surpassed all records in her wonderful development, and even now can almost keep step with the great Western Powers.

In 1892, the writer visited the Mikado's empire, and on his return spoke enthusiastically of its people. But what he said of China was precisely the reverse. On this account, some thought that he exaggerated the virtues of the one and the vices of the other. But the events of 1895 verified his words. China has sunk still lower in the estimation of mankind, while Japan has risen far above the expectations of her warmest friends. In fact, Japan, in many ways, is now the most interesting country in the world. She is the pioneer of progress in the Orient. Consider her amazing growth



A DISTANT MARKET FOR CONNECTICUT CLOCKS.

in manufactures. By these she may ere long control the commerce of the entire East. Look at her admirable schools and universities. They can be favorably compared with not a few in Europe. Think of her government, which in less

than twenty-five years has achieved what it took Europe centuries to accomplish,—to rid herself of feudalism and become a constitutional monarchy. Regard her army, which accomplished marvels in the recent war; and her navy, which elicited the admiration of the world.

In all these respects we find a national transformation, which in rapidity at least has had no parallel in history. It is, then, this extraordinary land, which has a long and brilliant past, and is apparently to have a still more brilliant future, that we are now to explore still farther.

However novel and attractive the cities of the Mikado's empire may be, it is from traveling through the country of Japan that one derives the greatest pleasure and instruction. For it is not what Japan has borrowed from the western world that most delights the foreign tourist. On the contrary, the more he sees of their artistic, happy, natural life, away from foreign contact, the better he likes it.

It was on a beautiful October morning, that, leaving cities and railways for a time behind us, we began our journey through a few of the Mikado's provinces. Seating ourselves in jinrikishas, we dashed across a little bridge and up



THE EDWIN BOOTH OF JAPAN.



a mountain gorge which led to Miyanóshita. There are few things more thoroughly delightful than traveling through a mountainous country in a carriage or on horseback. On a former trip I had thought that nothing could approach in pleasure this mode of traveling in Norway. But here it proved fully as enjoyable. It is true, the grandeur of Norwegian scenery is not met with in Japan; but, on the other hand, the charming novelty of every-



APPROACHING MIYANÓSHITA.

thing  
one sees,  
makes such

excursions peerless in the traveler's memory.

At first, our road was an embowered lane winding along a mountain-side, green to the summit with luxuriant foliage. There was no parapet along the edge, as on the mountain roads of Switzerland; but, as a reassuring compensation, we had no horses here to back or shy or roll us down the precipices. The steeds that drew us up the narrow path were copper-colored athletes, driven tandem, and without need of rein or whip. On, on they went with ceaseless energy, their

splendid muscles working like machinery. Insensible to fatigue, they laughed and talked incessantly, asking only one favor of their drivers,—that of being allowed to reduce their cloth-



A JAPANESE VILLAGE NEAR MIYANÓSHITA.

ing to the scantiest limits. Below us, as we rode along, was an impetuous stream, which lured from time to time adventurous waterfalls to join its course. We halted to admire one of these at our leisure. Its special charm was not its height, though it descends several hundred feet: it was the



A BIT OF JAPAN.

wealth of colored foliage that made for it a frame of green and gold. A little to the left, an opening in the trees revealed a tiny shrine, and in the foreground stood an aged priest, who had stopped to gaze in wonder at such strange





RURAL SCENERY IN JAPAN.

intruders. What pictures thus disclose themselves at every turn throughout this marvelous country! Anywhere else you would pronounce them stage effects—the cataracts which resemble tangled skeins of silk-

en floss; the miniature pagodas interspersed among the trees; and, brightening all with life and color, the Japanese women with their brilliant sashes, as if the vanished nymphs and dryads of the place had now assumed material shapes, intending to be worshiped somehow, even by the skeptics.

Yet this is what one sees .



A MOUNTAIN STREAM.



A JAPANESE FAIR.





continually in Japan. What would in other lands seem artificial, is here only natural. Accordingly, the charm of Japanese scenery is enhanced by the surroundings given it by man. Picturesque figures, clad in robes as multicolored as the trees themselves; bridges, temples, and pagodas, often as brilliant as the autumnal leaves around them—these make



A JAPANESE BRIDGE.

the landscapes irresistibly attractive, as if both man and Nature had agreed to wear at the same time their holiday attire. One feels that he is traveling through a land where Nature is adored, where animals are kindly treated, and where such pleasing and poetic myths as we associate only with ancient Greece and Rome are still believed by



A FARMER IN HIS WORKING SUIT.

many faithful souls, and make each forest the abode of rural deities and every mountain rivulet a place of prayer.

As we moved farther up the valley, we found at every turn some new source of enjoyment; first, in the vivid foliage, which made the mountains seem like huge bouquets of ferns; then, in the silvery stream whose voice would shout a welcome to us as it hurried on; and lastly, in the little Japanese inns, along whose

carved-wood balconies were hung red paper lanterns, that glowed at night like monster rubies, and gave to the whole scene that charmingly unreal, or theatrical effect, so characteristic of Japan.

Seeing some buildings on the opposite bank, we asked: "How do you cross here from shore to shore? Boats surely are not possible; nor are there



A RUSTIC BRIDGE.



any bridges, unless — but certainly those tiny structures yonder, stretched like a spider's web across the flood, cannot be bridges!" Yet closer scrutiny revealed the fact that they are really used as a means of transportation. Long poles of bamboo, bound about with reeds, and supported in the centre by a rough-hewn tripod,—such are the structures often spanning mountain-torrents in Japan! If swept away,



A CHARACTERISTIC VIEW.

they can easily be replaced; and, while they last, the peasants cross them fearlessly.

"But how about wagons, carriages, and horses?" we inquired, only to be again reminded, with a laugh, that no provision need be made for them, for carriage-roads do not yet exist in these mountain regions, and horses are almost as rare as centaurs. In fact, one of the first things to impress us in these rural districts was the absence of animals. We saw no oxen, sheep, or donkeys, and only in rare instances a pony. Japanese farmers hardly know what meat, milk, and

butter are, and when one recollects that they have never eaten bread, and have no word for it in their language, one naturally asks, "On what do they live?" Through our interpreter, we questioned a young laborer who was returning homeward from the fields in his everyday working-suit of clothes. He was well-formed and looked well-nourished, like most of his fellows, yet he assured us that only fish, rice, and vegetables formed his diet. When, therefore, one considers how much hard work the Japanese perform, and thinks of all



A JAPANESE MEAL.

the thousands here, who, in lieu of horses, haul heavy loads of wood and stone, it cannot be denied that they derive from their food quite as much strength as we do from ours. It is true, doctors declare that Japanese food, while good for peasants working in the open air, is bad for those who lead a sedentary life. But is anything good for those who lead a sedentary life?

"What," we inquired somewhat impatiently, "is the meaning of this dearth of animal life,—here, where a million acres on these verdant hills would give the best of pasturage

for cattle?" The explanation given us was a religious one; for the Buddhist faith declares that to destroy any living creature is a sin. This doctrine, through successive centuries, has had a great effect upon the people. It practically forbids them to eat meat. If the United States, therefore, should

ever become Buddhistic, a colossal industry of the West would disappear. No doubt, in time, stock-farms will be established in Japan, as foreigners create a large demand for beef, butter, milk, and cream; but agricultural customs are always



A POSTMAN.



GATHERING SEA FOOD.

slow to change. One might have supposed that catching fish would also have been prohibited by Buddhism, since that involves the sacrifice of life. But, as the waters around the Japanese islands fairly swarm with them, to



have forbidden the people fish would have removed their staple article of diet, and caused a positive hatred for the new religion. It is probable, therefore, that the Buddhist priests knew (just as well as the Japanese fishermen) where to draw the line.

One day, as we were rolling through the country in jinrikishas, we saw approaching us an extraordinary apparition.



HOTEL AT MIYANOSHITA.

“What is it,” we exclaimed, “a winged Mercury, or a Coney Island bather rushing to the beach?”

“That is the letter-carrier,” was the reply; “and the small waterproof paper bag at the end of his bamboo pole contains the mail.”

In fact, where villages are not reached by a railroad, the old system of swift couriers still prevails. Let us not laugh, however, at Japan’s postal-service. It was only started in

1871; but it is already extended over the entire country, with more than five thousand post-offices and postal savings-banks. In 1881, after only ten years' growth, it carried ninety-five million letters and postal-cards, and its rate of postage is the cheapest in the world. A country postman, it is true, is rather oddly dressed. One thinks, at first, perhaps, that he is wearing a gaily-colored

jersey. Not at all—his only garment is a cloth about the waist, with a kerchief around his head to keep the perspiration out of his eyes, and he has straw sandals on his feet. He is tattooed. It seems impossible, at a first glance, that such elaborate decoration is produced by sepia and vermilion



A TATTOOED MAN.



A POST-OFFICE.

alone, carefully pricked in with needles; nevertheless it is a fact. These brilliant hues are proof against the greatest amount of washing. A tattooed man could no more change his colors than could an



Ethiopian his skin or a leopard his spots. In feudal times this style of ornamentation was resorted to by the Japanese for the same reason that their hideous masks were worn in



AT MIYANÓSHITA.

battle,—in order to inspire fear. Even now, although the custom is prohibited, some wonderful specimens of tattooing can be seen; and from actual observation we were forced to believe the statement that artists in that line are able to prick into the skin a fairly

faithful likeness of the man himself, or perchance of a friend. Such workmen now complain that they have little opportunity to practice their profession. Some patronage, however, still comes to them from youthful foreigners. Two sons of the Prince of Wales, for example, as well as Prince George of Greece, have on their bodies specimens of this ornamentation; and if some travelers whom we met here could be induced to raise their sleeves they would display to their astonished friends one or two very pretty Japanese views,—“colored,”—though not “dissolving.”

One of the first and most delightful halting-places in our trip across Japan was the hotel at Miyanóshita. It is as dainty as a lacquered box, with floors, chairs, and balustrades as neat as wax and beautifully polished. The rooms





RURAL SCENERY.



are furnished simply, but in European style; the food is specially prepared for foreigners; and in cold weather the corridors can be enclosed in glass. What wonder, then, that tourists resort to Miyanóshita? For, in addition to its good hotel, it has the best of mountain air and delightful hot baths from a natural spring, and is a starting-point for many notable excursions. On most of these, however, jinrikishas cannot be used.

From this point on, the beaten roads are left, and only narrow paths ascend the hills. Hence, on the morning after our arrival, we found ourselves confronted by the most novel style of conveyance we had thus far seen. "What under heaven is this?" I cried, as I caught sight of it. "Must I get into this thing, and haven't you any blankets for these horses?"

My friend sat down upon a rock and vowed he would not go. "Give me

a jinrikisha," he moaned; "I'd rather be once more a baby-jumper in my little carriage than a mere stone in a sling, as you will be in that!" He finally compromised on an arm-chair, hung on bamboo poles and carried by



A KAGO.

four men; but I resolved to give this vehicle a thorough trial. So crawling in, like a dog into its basket, I crossed my legs after the fashion of a Turk who had fallen over backward,

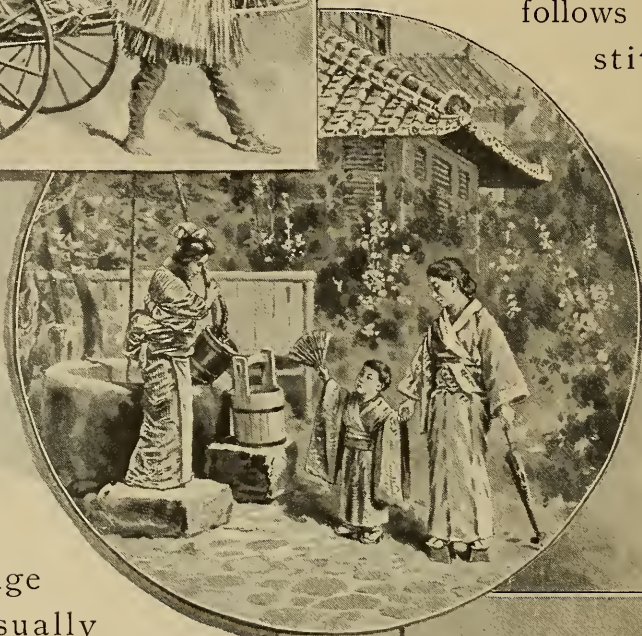


and told my well-groomed steeds to go ahead. The unique and novel instrument of torture to which I thus subjected myself is called a "kago."

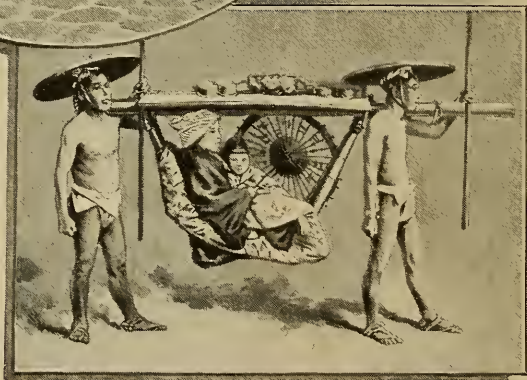
It is a shallow basket, suspended from a bamboo pole, on which it swings irregularly like an erratic pendulum.

Two men take this upon their shoulders, while a third

follows as a substitute; for



they change places usually every fifteen minutes. Mine changed every five. The man who invented the iron cage, within which the unhappy prisoner could neither stand up nor lie down, must have heard of a Japanese



1. A RAIN-COAT. 2. AMONG THE FLOWERS. 3. A KAGO.

kago. The basket is too near the pole to let the occupant sit erect, and much too short for him to extend his feet without giving the bearer in front a violent prod in the small of the back. After many frantic experiments, I found that

the easiest fashion of kago-riding was to lie upon my side, my head lolling about in one direction, and my feet in the other. Even then, the lower half of my body kept falling asleep, and I was frequently obliged to get out and walk, to avoid curvature of the spine. Yet, incredible though it seems, Japanese



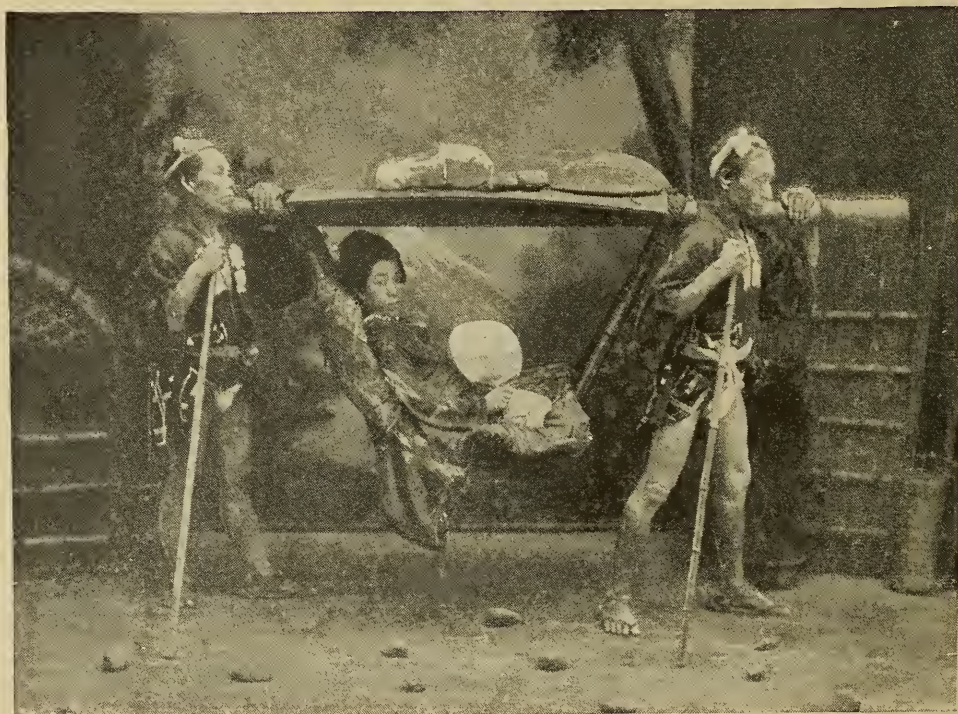
SWINGING LIKE A PENDULUM.

women often travel by these kagos. They certainly looked a thousand times more comfortable than I felt; but then, the Japanese are short, and, moreover, are used to bending up their limbs like knife-blades when they seat themselves.

On a broad road, one experiences no sense of danger in these swinging cars; but, once in a while, when I was being



carried thus along a path two feet in width,—a mountain grazing my right elbow, and a ravine one thousand feet in depth just under my left shoulder-blade, I used to wonder just what would happen if one of these men should stumble; or if, becoming weary of their load, they should suddenly shoot me outward into space like a stone from a catapult. I prudently kept on good terms with my kago-men, and never



HUMAN PONIES.

refused them when they asked the privilege of halting to take a smoke.

Almost everything in Japan is small; nor is a Japanese pipe an exception to the rule. It is about as large as a lead-pencil with a child's thimble at the end. Three whiffs are all that any man can take from them, and the wad of tobacco thus consumed is just about the size of a two-grain quinine pill. Hence, the long inhalations of our smokers, the drooping backward of the head, the languid lifting of the eyes to watch the rings of perfumed smoke float lazily away,—all

these are unknown to the Japanese. With them, — three little puffs, and all is over. This seems, however, to satisfy them completely, and with the air of one who has dined well, they knock the ashes from the tiny thimbles, and



STOPPING FOR A SMOKE.

resume their march. After about four hours of this kago-riding we reached the summit of a mountain pass, called Otemetoge. From this point a glorious vista met our gaze.



A JAPANESE LADY EN ROUTE.

Behind us, in the distance, lay Miyanóshita and its neighboring villages, resembling a group of islands in an ocean of green foliage. Far off upon the heights a line of sunlit buildings gleamed like whitecaps on a bright-green sea. Nearer, and al-



most at our feet, some objects glittering in the noonday light attracted our attention; and these, examined through a field-glass, proved to be a foaming mountain stream and silvery cascade. At first we hardly dared to look on the other side



FUJI-YAMA.

of the pass, lest we should experience disappointment. But fortune favored us. The sky was clear; and gazing eagerly toward the west, we saw, directly opposite our point of observation, the grand old sacred mountain of Japan,—the world-renowned Fuji-yama.

It made me fairly catch my breath to look for the first time upon this noble peak, whose form had been portrayed on almost every specimen of Japanese art that I had seen from childhood. I felt as if I had been ushered into the presence of some mighty sovereign, whose name and deeds and splendid court had from my earliest years called forth my admiration. A score of interesting traits render a study of this mountain valuable. It is, in the first place, a volcano,—the tallest of those fiery furnaces whose devastations cast a lurid light along the path of Japanese history. Its last eruption was in 1707, when all the plain around its base was buried



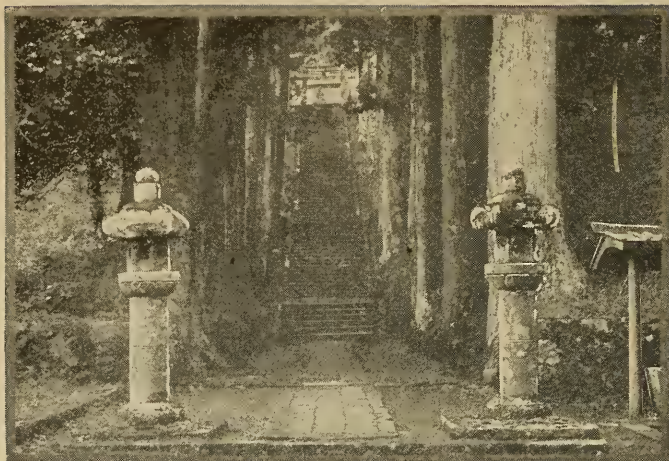
deep with cinders, and ashes fell fifty miles away. Yet even now, although no wreath of smoke surrounds its brow, it sends forth steam through several apertures, much as a captive serpent hisses though its fangs are drawn. The little spur upon its southern slope is due to the last eruption. Before that, both of its curving sides were perfectly symmetrical.

The ascent of Fuji involves a long, hard climb for weary miles through lava-ashes, sometimes ankle-deep. The violence of the wind on certain portions of the mountain is proverbial, and by some travelers has been described as so appalling that they were fearful lest some furious blast might blow them into space and scatter their remains over a dozen provinces.



THE SACRED PEAK.

One cannot wonder that the Japanese have always deemed this mountain sacred. A perfect, silver-crested pyramid, over twelve thousand feet in height, rising in one majestic sweep from sea to sky; changing its color constantly from dawn to



APPROACH TO A SHRINE.

dusk, like some officiating priest, a mediator between God and man, assuming consecrated robes of purple, orange, violet, green, and gold, —how could man help regarding it as a glorious shrine inhabited by Deity itself? To its mighty base, as to some incense-burning altar, more than ten thousand reverent pilgrims annually come to make the arduous ascent; and to relieve their hardships, “rest-houses” have been built at intervals along the path, while, even on the summit, the three entrances to the volcano’s crater, which is four hundred feet deep, are marked by sacred gateways. Most of these pilgrims



THE GOD OF WIND.





MENDICANT PILGRIMS.

wear upon their shoulders the garments almost universally worn in stormy weather by the Japanese peasants, — a kind of waterproof, made of straw or grass, to shed the rain and snow. These vary from a finely-plaited matting to the cheaper, rougher grades, which make the wearer's back look like the roof of a thatched cottage. Up-

on their heads are hats of split bamboo or straw, that bear a comical resemblance to enormous mushrooms, and serve as sunshades or umbrellas, according to the condition of the weather. We met such pilgrims everywhere throughout Japan. At least a hundred thousand people thus become, in summer-time, religious tramps, and make their



THE PILGRIM GARB.



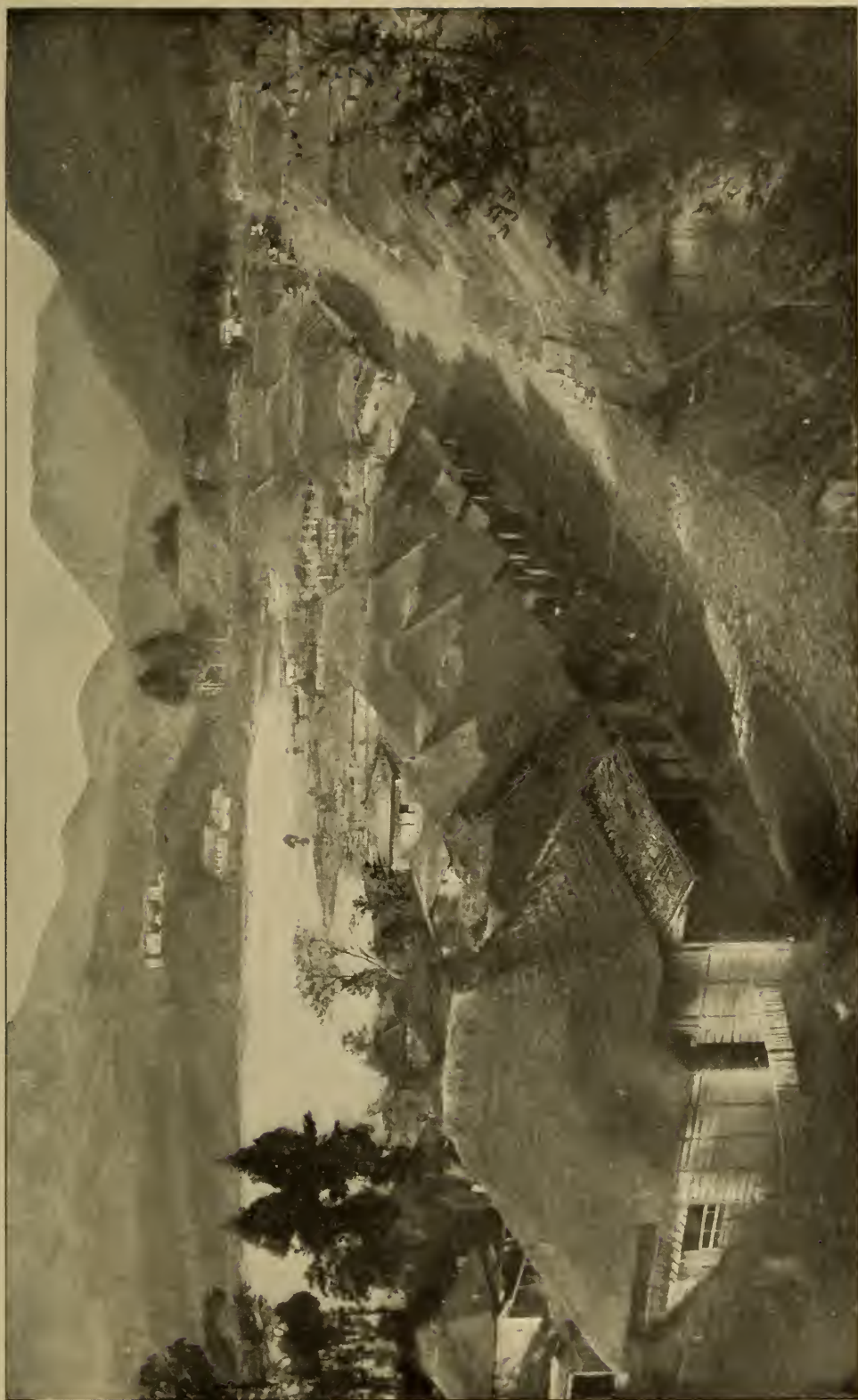
STATUE OF JIZO.

way to sacred islands, holy mountain-tops, and shrines whose names would fill a lengthy catalogue.

Many of these itinerant worshipers solicit alms to help them on their way; but there are also associations of these pilgrims, whose members pay one cent a month into a common treasury. From such a tax as that, however, the treasury never

CROSSING THE  
TEN-PROVINCE PASS.





VILLAGE STREET.





A LOVELY WALK NEAR HAKONE.

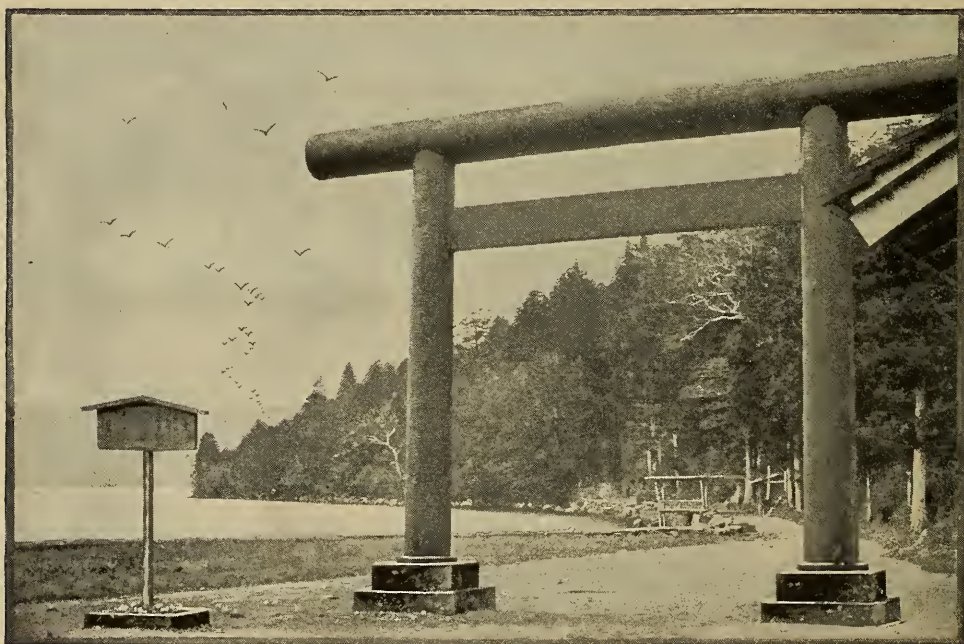
becomes congested, and hence the number of those who travel is necessarily limited. When, therefore, the pilgrim season opens, a certain number of the wanderers, chosen by lot, visit the shrines and represent those whose circumstances compel them to remain at home. These pilgrimages, it is said, are on the wane, but they are still popular. Only five

APPROACH TO THE  
TEMPLE AT NARA.



years ago, at the festival of one famous shrine, twenty-one thousand people alighted in two days at a country railway station where the daily average is three hundred and fifty; and to another sacred shrine about two hundred and fifty thousand pilgrims annually come.

Another charming excursion in Japan led us across the "Ten-province pass" to Atami on the southern coast. Of course it had to be made in chairs or kagos; but such slight



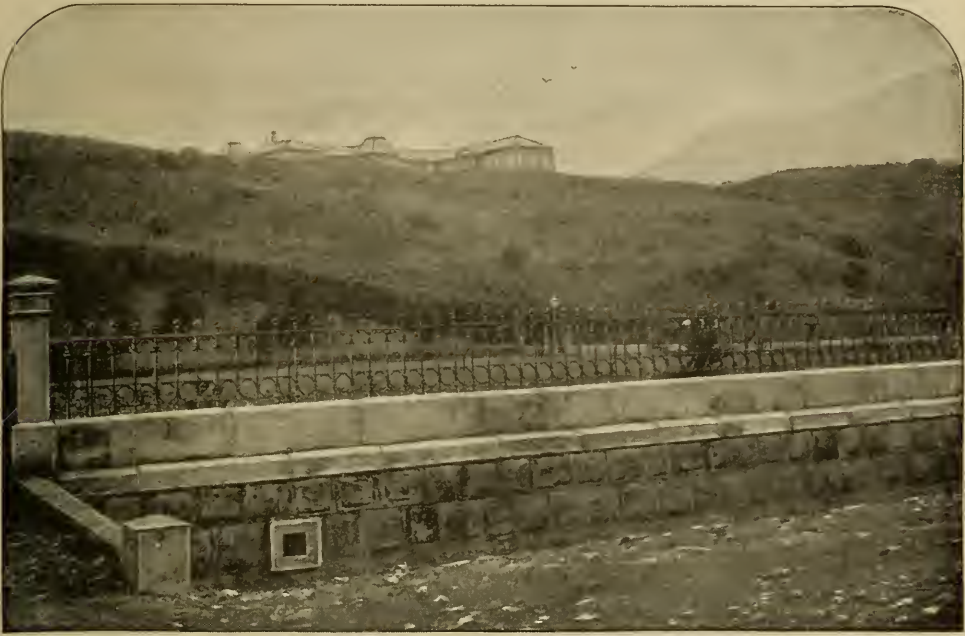
ON THE SHORE OF HAKONE LAKE.

hardships sink to insignificance when one recalls delightful days spent in enjoying lovely scenery, inhaling pure, invigorating air, and riding over mountain-paths on which the sunlight, filtering through the trees, traced tremulous mosaics of alternate light and shade.

Occasionally on this journey we came upon the sculptured effigy of some protecting deity. We were especially impressed by one that was colossal in dimensions, and had been carved laboriously from the natural cliff eleven hundred years before. It represents the Buddhist god, Jizo, who is



the especial guardian of travelers and little children. Around the base of this extraordinary figure were heaps of pebbles which had been placed there, one by one, by wayfarers for centuries. This custom originated in one of the most singular myths which religion has ever produced, and is a striking proof of the fondness of the Japanese for children. Upon the banks of the river, in the lower world, is said to live a demon who catches little children as they try to cross, and



THE MIKADO'S PALACE, HAKONE.

makes them work for him at his eternal task of piling stones upon the shore. Every pebble laid at the statue's feet is thought to lighten the burden of some little one below! Smilingly yielding to the influence of this pathetic superstition, we ourselves left some pebbles, and then moved onward down the mountain side, in the same path pursued by all the thousands who had here preceded us, like little boats upon the stream of Time.

Presently a sudden turn revealed to us Hakone Lake,—a lovely sheet of water surrounded by densely wooded hills.



ATAMI.

This is a summer resort that rivals even Miyanóshita in popularity. The air is delightfully invigorating here, twenty-four hundred feet above the sea, and in the hot season, not only are all the

Japanese tea-houses filled with guests, but families from Tokio and Yokohama rent all the available cottages around the lake. To some extent, indeed, this region has imperial patronage, for, on a pretty hill which overlooks the water, is a palace built for the Mikado. It must be said, however, that he has never occupied it, since he rarely leaves his residence in Tokio, but we were told that the Crown Prince, a lad of fourteen, had been here several times. In almost every other country in the world the public is now permitted



THE GEYSER AT ATAMI.

to enter the abodes of royalty when their distinguished occupants are absent; but not so here. These palace doors are closed inexorably to all travelers. We were not allowed even to step within the grounds.

At length, descending to the level of the sea, our faithful bearers brought us to Atami—a pretty town, famous for the manufacture of that Japanese paper which seemed to me one of the most astonishing products of the country. It is so fine

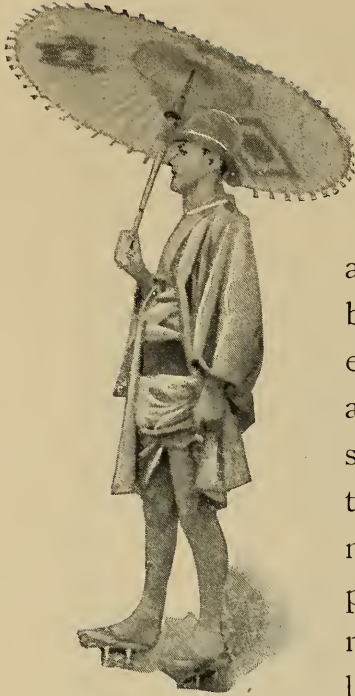


BY LAKE HAKONE.

and soft that it is used for handkerchiefs and napkins, and takes the place of lint in surgery; yet is so firm that it is manufactured into lantern screens, brooms, air-cushions, and umbrellas. Torn into strips, it also takes the place of string, while all the inner walls of Japanese houses consist of screens of paper, divided into squares, like panes of glass.

As we were one day walking through Atami, a sudden outburst of steam, on the other side of a fence, came very near stampeding our entire party. When we recovered sufficient breath to ask the cause of the explosion, we learned that





A MIXTURE OF STYLES.

it was occasioned by a small geyser, which has a species of convulsion every four hours, and each time pours out sulphurous vapor for a space of fifteen minutes.

It would appear that the people of Atami are living on the lid of a volcanic tea-kettle, but evidently they have no fear. They have enclosed the geyser with a fence like a wild animal in a cage, and close beside it is a sanitarium, where patients with diseases of the throat and lungs inhale the steam. It may be an excellent place for sufferers from pulmonary troubles, but we concluded that nervous occupants of this retreat must feel like the traditional darky on the safety-valve of a Mississippi steamboat.

The old-style doctors of Japan are still in vogue in certain rural districts, though they are being rapidly superseded by the young practitioners who have received a medical education in Europe or America. With the old Japanese physicians a favorite mode of cure was sticking a long needle into the part of the body supposed to be diseased. Another universal panacea was branding the body with a burning weed called *moxa*. This was prescribed for troubles as unlike as rheuma-



A JAPANESE DOCTOR OF THE OLD STYLE.



A JAPANESE LADY.





tism and toothache. Women, at certain critical moments in their lives, were thought to be relieved by having the little toe of their right foot burned three times. We often noticed scars upon the naked backs and limbs of our jinrikisha men, and learned that they had been produced by this strange medical treatment.

In traveling through the rural districts of Japan, the tourist soon becomes accustomed to the peasant's lack of clothing. It is not the exception here to be undressed—it is the rule.

Even in the streets of Tokio one will behold, on rainy days, thousands of men wearing neither trousers nor stockings, walking about with tucked-up clothes and long white limbs, which gives them the appearance of



DRESS AND UNDRESS.

storks upon a river-bank. Even those who have adopted the European dress will frequently, on a muddy day, practice economy by discarding their trousers, and, unconscious of any incongruity, will take their "constitutional" on wooden clogs, with bare legs and feet, though having the upper part of their bodies covered with a frock-coat and a Derby hat!

Among these scantily-clad people one often sees a somewhat better dressed but melancholy man, who, with his downcast eyes and shaven head, appears to have lost his friends together with his hair. He represents a useful class



A MASSEUR.

of people in Japan—the *masseurs*, or professional manipulators of the body. One should not hastily conclude that he is smoking. It is true, the article between his lips is usually a pipe, but it is not the kind that holds tobacco. It is a reed-like instrument, on which he blows two plaintive notes to advertise his presence. In every Japanese town we always heard at night the mournful call of the *masseur*. The laughter which their appearance at first provokes, gives place to pity when

one learns that nearly all of these men are blind. It is a calling which, notwithstanding their infirmity, they can follow, and they are said to be adepts at it.

To appreciate a Japanese *masseur*, it is necessary to see one of them at work. This, it is true, is more than he himself can do, since he is blind; but our pity is soon diverted from



MASSAGE.



JAPANESE COIFFURE.

him to the person he is treating, not so much because of the pinching to which he subjects his victim as on account of the pillow on which the patient's head reclines. It makes one think of Anne Boleyn or Mary Stuart, with their necks upon the fatal block; for a Japanese pillow is a wedge-shaped piece of wood, about a foot in length, on top of which is tied a wad of cloth, about the size of a Bologna sausage. To try to sleep with the neck supported in this fashion

would seem to most Americans as hopeless as to woo slumber with a fence-rail for a pillow. One shudders to consider the discomfort, under these conditions, of turning over in bed, and trying to locate the neck on such a diminutive support. Yet, after all, we are creatures of habit, and forty million people in Japan use just such pillows every night, without suffering from insomnia. It is even claimed that Japanese women delight in them, since they do not disarrange the hair. Nor does this appear strange, when one scrutinizes their methods of coiffure. They are something marvelous. The



A JAPANESE PILLOW.





IN THE BOUDOIR.

hair of Japanese women is, with few exceptions, as black as ebony, and very abundant. Moreover, it is usually profusely oiled, and glistens like a raven's wing. Through these polished tresses are invariably drawn hairpins of gold, strings of coral, or ornaments of tortoise-shell. But as to how the ladies of Japan produce in their coiffures their black crescendos and

diminuendos, their sharp staccato puffs and portamento waterfalls, the writer dares not hazard a conjecture. Yet of one thing we may be sure: if we were to venture into a Japanese lady's boudoir, we should find that help is needed to produce them. The toilette-stand and looking-glass might seem to us a trifle low; but we must bear in mind that Japanese domestic life is regulated by a level three feet lower than our own: in other words, where we use chairs,



THE LAST TOUCHES.

they seat themselves on the floor. This furnished us a key to much that hitherto had seemed puzzling in their habits. Whether a thing be sensible or not depends upon the point of view,—in this case, the height at which we seat ourselves. Once regard an exquisitely clean floor of cushioned matting as an immense divan, and taking off our muddy boots becomes a matter of course; and tables and lamps and mirrors will be placed at a height adapted to our needs.

When a foreigner beholds for the first time a Japanese lady seated on her heels, as is the custom, he fancies that she has the small of her back supported by an enormous cushion. But when he subsequently sees this lady walking down the street, attended by her maid, he perceives that what appeared to him a sofa-



THE OBI.

pillow is really a regular part of her costume. It is a heavy silken sash, extremely long and often very elegant, which keeps the robe itself in place. This *obi*, as it is called, is the most precious article of a Japanese lady's wardrobe. Its usual length is fourteen feet, and when its material is silk or gold brocade it will be seen that it has some value. These sashes exhibit, of course, a great variety of color, and one can scarcely find a prettier sight than that of several well-dressed Japanese ladies, grouped together in the vivid sunlight. They look as radiant and attractive as a bouquet of flowers.



A JAPANESE BEAUTY.

that she will never marry again. In that case, it is said, she ties the bow in front. Whether this wards off all proposals may be doubted; but gossip relates that, once in a while, the widow comes to look at life a little differently, and then the bow works gradually round again to its original position.

Japanese ladies make a serious mistake when they exchange their national style of dress for that of foreigners, for, as a rule, their charm and beauty leave them when they appear in European garments. On two occasions we saw some thus arrayed, and

American ladies who have tried the Japanese dress say that the tying of the *obi* is extremely difficult. But here, as in the art of hair-dressing, a lady's maid is almost indispensable. The bow, although arranged in different styles, is always worn behind, thus spoiling, in some measure, the outline of the form. When a Japanese lady becomes a widow, she makes no change in the position of the *obi*, unless she wishes publicly to announce



TYING THE OBI.





FRIENDS IN COUNCIL.





A JAPANESE SHOP.

the effect was painful. If most of them had put on each other's dresses by mistake, they would have looked about as well; and in the absence of corsets their little figures seemed as

much out of place as children in their mother's wrappers.

Some years ago a letter signed by Mrs. Cleveland and many other prominent women of America was addressed to their sisters in Japan, urging them not to risk their health and comfort by adopting European dress. It was of little avail. The die was cast. In 1885 the Japanese Empress and her



A BOAT-RIDE IN JAPAN.



suite appeared for the last time in public in the tasteful costumes of the past. Since then, the order has gone forth that



GEISHA GIRLS.

all ladies who present themselves at court must do so in European dress; and it is to be feared that, ere a score of years have passed, the lovely and appropriate robes of old Japan will have disappeared

forever. Until quite recently, the universal rule for Japanese women, when they married, was to shave their eyebrows, pull out their eyelashes, and stain their teeth jet black. Even the present empress did these things at her marriage. The idea seems to have been to make themselves look hideous, so as to have no more admirers, de-



A DANCING GIRL.

spite the fact that the average husband, as we all know, appreciates his wife better if he perceives that other men are

aware of her attractions. But under the new *régime* this sad disfigurement is rapidly disappearing, and at present the younger ladies of Japan, at least, show rows of pearly teeth when laughter parts their lips.

The richest toilettes that we saw in the land of the Mikado were worn by *geisha* girls, without whom Japanese festivals are incomplete. Some of these dainty creatures form an orchestra while others dance. Their instruments of sound



A TEA-HOUSE.

(one can hardly call them instruments of music) consist usually of two kinds of drums and a long, three-stringed banjo, called the *samisen*. Sometimes a flute also is used. We frequently disputed as to which of these was the least excruciating, but on the whole we preferred the drums. When to this combination a human voice was added, our teeth were set on edge.

Young as they look, these *geishas* are professionals, and training-schools exist in Tokio and Kioto, where they are sometimes taught when only seven years of age. A Japanese dancing-girl forms a charming picture. Her long *kimono* of the





A JAPANESE FAMILY MOVING.

richest silk is beautifully embroidered with such a wealth of lovely flowers, that she herself resembles a bouquet in motion. Her broad *obi* is of the heaviest crape, and falls upon a petticoat of gorgeous color.

Black lacquered sandals half conceal her tiny, white-socked feet, and in each hand she holds a decorated fan. Do not expect from her the slightest approach to Lottie Collins. The dance of "Ta-ra-ra-boom-de-ay," performed by a *geisha* girl, would make a subject of the Mikado, if he were unprepared for it, faint away. Nor will the spectator see the least exposure of her personal charms. For, strangely enough, the Japanese, who will at other times dispense with all the clothing possible, conceal a dancer's form with rigid severity. There is not much expression in these dancers' faces. One feels that they are not women, but girls to whom intense emotions



ON THE JAPANESE COAST.



are as yet unknown. They merely represent in graceful pantomime some song or story, flitting about like pretty butterflies, or swaying back and forth like flowers in a summer breeze.

Leaving Atami, we had a charming ride of seven miles beside the ocean. The road (which may be called the Japanese Cornice) is passable for jinrikishas; and while on one side we looked off upon the Pacific, on the other we found that



LOVERS OF NATURE AND ART.

every valley had a background of well-rounded mountains, covered with verdure soft as velvet, from which at intervals a stream of crystal water rushed to meet the sea. The scenery of Japan may not be grand, but for a charming combination of the elements which make a country beautiful, enlivened constantly by natives in their novel occupations, the seven-mile drive from old Atami can hardly be surpassed.

Moreover, the people, as we met them on these journeys, pleased us greatly. They were invariably courteous and gentle in their manners, and no boorishness was visible, even

among the lower classes. They always seemed to be good-natured. However stormy the weather, however heavy the load, however bad the roads, we never heard a Japanese complain, nor saw one in a bad humor. If the foreigner becomes angry with them, they laugh as if he were making himself



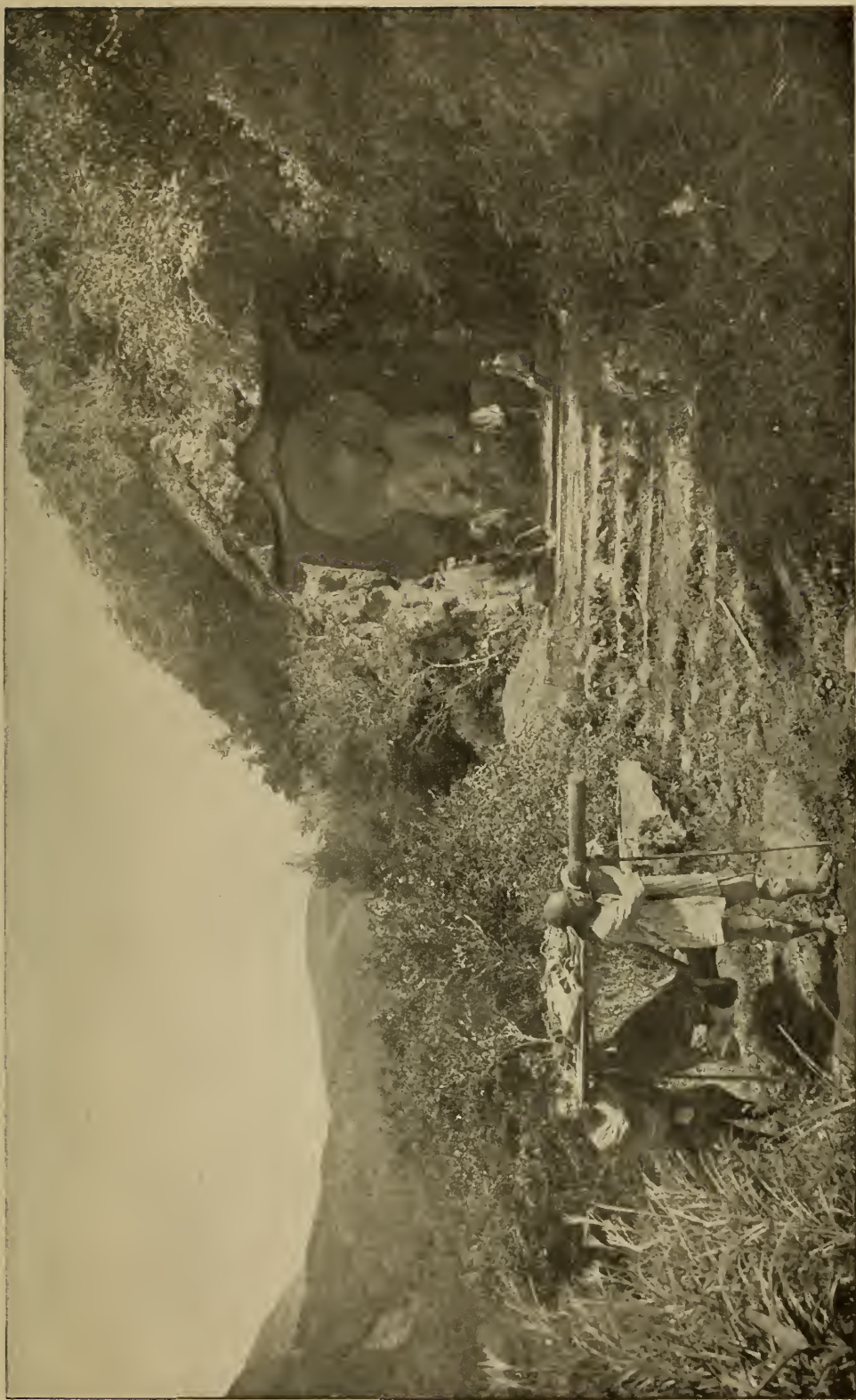
A JAPANESE AT PRAYER.

ridiculous; and presently he feels that they are right, and that violent anger is in truth absurd.

Yet, just as beneath the smiling landscapes of Japan still lurk the terrible volcanic forces of destruction, so underneath the sunny dispositions of the Japanese are all the characteristics of the warrior. Their history has thoroughly established that they are a manly, patriotic, martial race. Their gentleness, therefore, comes not from servility, but is the product of inborn courtesy and refinement.

The Japanese are naturally of a happy disposition. A smile illumines every face. Apparently their past has no regrets, their present no annoyances, their future no alarms.





THE GUARDIAN OF TRAVELERS AND LITTLE CHILDREN.





They love the beautiful in nature and in art. They live simply; and how much that means! Their wants are few. The houses of the wealthy do not differ much from those of the poor. Hence life for them is free from almost all those harrowing cares and worriments which sometimes make existence in the Occident a long, incessant struggle to keep up appearances. If they are sad, they seldom show their sadness in public. They evidently believe with the poet:

"Laugh, and the world laughs with you;  
Weep, and you weep alone."

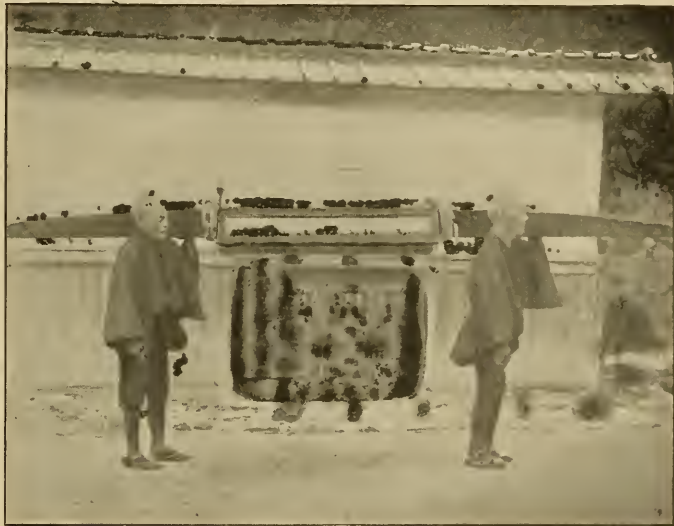
In some provinces of Japan, when a new bridge is opened, not the richest, but the happiest, persons in the community are chosen to pass over it first, as a favorable omen.

Strange as it may appear, however, these qualities of the Japanese have been regarded by some travelers as faults. A tourist once solemnly remarked to me: "The great trouble with the Japanese is that they are too happy."

"What!" I exclaimed, "can any one be too happy in this world?"

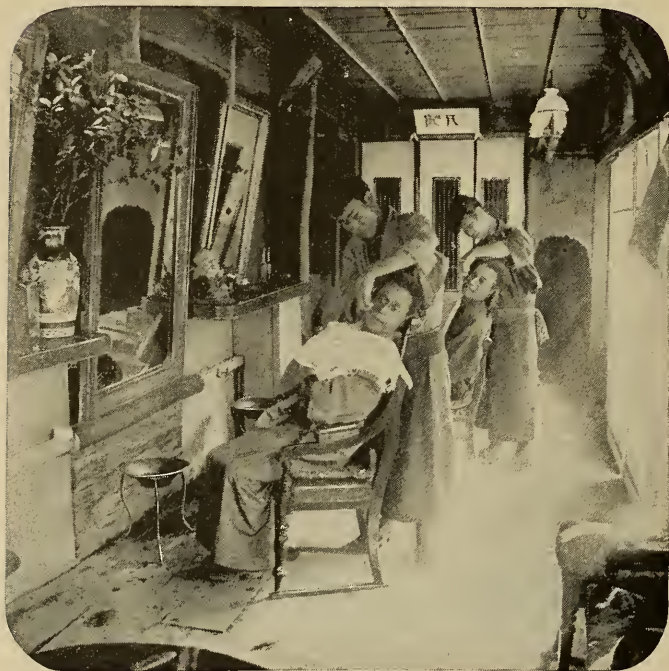
"Certainly," was the reply; "the Japanese are too light-hearted to

learn with advantage the lessons of adversity. If a calamity befalls them, they often smile and say, 'Well, it can't be helped,' and then try to think no more about it. Worst of all," he continued, "they do not worry about the future, but actually meet death fearlessly and calmly."



A JAPANESE HEARSE.

“My friend,” I answered, “if to enjoy as much as possible this world that God has given us, if to smile bravely in adversity, and if to die without fear, are faults, it would be well if many other people possessed them, too. You re-



A BARBER SHOP.

mind me of the old lady in New Hampshire, who exclaimed sadly, ‘The Universalists tell us that all men are to be saved, but — we hope for better things!’ ”

In fact, a remarkable characteristic of the Japanese is the cheerful, almost jovial, way they

have of announcing a calamity. An English resident of Japan called our attention to this fact soon after our arrival, and our experience confirmed his testimony. Whether the cause be nervousness or a dislike to give one pain, the fact remains that the Japanese will often preface a bit of dreadful news with laughter, or at least with a chuckle. Thus, whenever our guide called our attention to a funeral, his face would wreath itself in smiles.

Still more extraordinary was the manner of a barber in the hotel at Yokohama. As he was shaving me one morning, after a moderate earthquake-shock the night before, he suddenly remarked, with what appeared to be a burst of unpremeditated merriment: “Oh, last night’s shock was nothing. Why, a few years ago, in Tokio, my father and mother were



killed outright by an earthquake (Ha! Ha!); the house fell right on top of them (He! He!), and crushed them both to death (Ha! Ha! Ha!).''

It is difficult to explain this peculiarity otherwise than by supposing it to be a nervous mannerism; for, as a race, the Japanese are very affectionate, and filial reverence is a religious duty. In this instance I was so astonished at the man's hilarity, that I very nearly fell out of his chair. We thought of this incident again, when, some weeks later, we found ourselves in the Japanese province which had suffered most from the calamitous earthquake of October, 1891. Thousands of houses, we found, had been wrecked by that catas-



A RUINED VILLAGE.

trophe, and in one place the railway tracks had been violently bent and twisted, like a chain irregularly thrown upon the ground. The motion lasted less than a minute; but what cannot an earthquake do in forty seconds? There came one



SCATTERED BY AN EARTHQUAKE.

mighty shock,—and over an extent of many miles the buildings fell like packs of cards. Great blocks of solid masonry were tossed about like dice. Trees lay around like jackstraws. Large manufacturing towns

were ruined. Thousands of husbands, wives, and children who, but an instant previous, had been happy at their work or play, were suddenly crushed by falling roofs, mangled by heavy timbers, buried alive in the *débris*, or burned to ashes by fires caused by overturned braziers. By chance we traveled through this region on the first anniversary of that great calamity, and many people, we were told, felt anxious till the day was over. But earthquakes in Japan, alas! are limited



TWISTED BY AN EARTHQUAKE.



to no special dates. Their visits are extremely numerous and quite impartial as to months and days. Our earth is said to be quieting down in its subterranean disturbances; but poor Japan still has no less than fifty-one volcanoes labeled "active," and experiences every year, on an average, five hundred seismic shocks, besides numerous destructive typhoons or hurricanes. Most of them are, of course, mere tremors;



EFFECT OF A TYPHOON AT KOBE.

but once in a while there comes a stroke that causes fearful devastation, as when in Tokio, in 1703, thirty-seven thousand lives were lost. Such terrible manifestations of volcanic power remind one of the more appalling scenes that must have been enacted here, when Nature brought these islands from the sea, pouring them from her fiery crucible.

In planning a journey through the interior of Japan, the tourist naturally inquires where and with what accommodation he is to spend the nights upon the trip. He need not have



the least anxiety. In the four prominent cities,—Tokio, Yokohama, Kobe, and Kioto,—there are first-class hotels, with rooms and food adapted to the tastes of foreigners. In many smaller places, too, like Miyanóshita and Atami, the hotels, although simpler, are both comfortable and well-managed. One suffers no discomfort in any of these localities. But in the country villages (which need not be included in



HOTEL AT KOBE.

the traveler's route unless he so desires), he must adopt the Japanese mode of sleeping in a tea-house—that is to say, in a regular Japanese hotel.

As our jinrikishas drew up before one of these, we saw a pretty, modern building of two stories, adorned as usual with paper lanterns. At intervals, on the edge of every balcony, were tall, rectangular boxes reaching from floor to ceiling. These upright cases contain wooden shutters, about as large as the leaves of a dining-table, which are at night

taken out, and pushed along in grooves, to make an outside wall for the entire house. When that is done, each balcony of course becomes an inside corridor. Thus every Japanese dwelling consists, as it were, of two houses, one within the other, enclosed in separate cases,—the in-



THREE OF A KIND.

side one of paper, the outer one of wood. As we alighted here, the landlord and his servants hurried out to greet us, dropped on their knees, and, with their hands spread out,



A TEA-HOUSE.

palms downward, and their foreheads almost touching the floor, they bowed repeatedly, like the “three little maids from school.” What a contrast was here between the Orient and the Occident. Imagine a hotel clerk in America

down upon his knees! In our hotels the traveler's first duty is to register his name. Here there is something even more



important to attend to, namely, removing his shoes. Off they must come before he steps upon the delicate mattings and the glistening floor, just as with us a muddy overshoe would not be tolerated on a parlor carpet. In fact, on entering the hall, one sees what in America would be called a hat-rack, but which is here designed for holding shoes.

The tourist, therefore, should invariably carry with him in Japan a pair of soft, felt slippers, for otherwise he will be fre-



A TEA-HOUSE VESTIBULE.

quently obliged to walk about in hotels, shops, and temples, with merely stockings on his feet.

In nearly all Japanese dwellings one usually finds, hung in conspicuous places, some handsomely framed mottoes and proverbs,

much as in many of our own country houses we read upon the walls such a comforting assurance as "The Lord will provide," or the melancholy conundrum "What is home without a mother?" To Occidental eyes, Japanese ideographs do not appear beautiful. They look like the meanderings of intoxicated flies that have been immersed in ink. As for their meaning, one motto was translated to us as signifying: "May Buddha bless this house!" Others were words of praise which princely visitors had left; while not a few were epigrams or proverbs, for which the Japanese are famous. Some of them





WRITING A LETTER.



ran as follows: "The absent get farther away every day;" "Clever preacher, short sermon;" "A woman's tongue three inches long can kill a man six feet high;" "Live under your own hat;" "Don't make a long call when the husband is not at home." And yet we send missionaries to Japan!



AT THE TEA-HOUSE DOOR.

With many bows and smiles the landlord of the tea-house led the way up a flight of exquisitely polished stairs, and showed us our apartments. We looked around us with astonishment, for no furniture was visible. The floor, it is true, was covered with fine matting, but, with that one exception, the rooms, which opened into each other, were as bare as



JAPANESE MOTTOES.

an unfurnished flat. Their number and extent depended largely on ourselves. Did we desire an entire story? We had but to push back the paper screens, and it was ours.

Did we insist on having separate rooms? Close up the little screens again, and each could sleep in his own paper box,



exactly twelve feet square. Unfortunately there are no locks upon these paper screens; hence, just as one is getting out of bed in the morning, the whole side of his room will sometimes disappear with the rapidity of a liberated Holland shade! Moreover, Japanese servants, urged by curiosity, will often poke a moistened finger through a square of paper, to study foreign toilettes at their leisure. During the daytime, in the



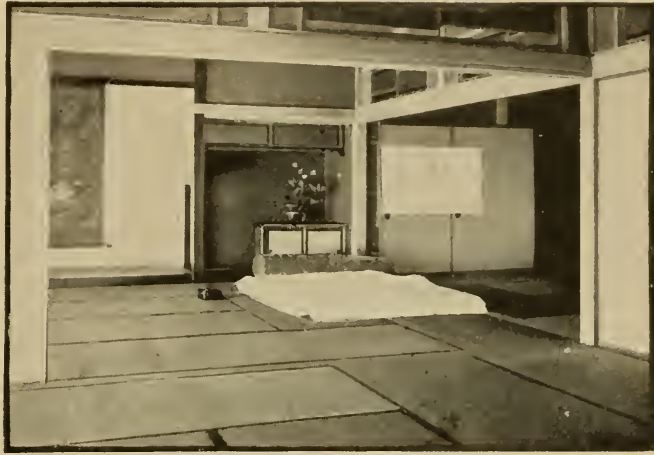
INTERIOR OF A TEA-HOUSE.

summer, even the screens are removed, to give free access to the breeze, and the house then becomes the empty skeleton of its former self.

But what most puzzled us at first was where to hang our clothes. There were no hooks upon the walls, there was not even a table for our toilet articles. It seemed too bad to put our coats and hair-brushes on the floor. But one must recollect that Japanese floors are not like ours, since no boots ever touch them. For native guests a beautiful, square, lacquered box is usually provided, in which they lay the carefully folded

robes which they remove before retiring. To us, however, no limited receptacle like that was given. We had the unrestricted floor.

The beds in which we slept afforded us the most amusement. When bedtime comes in Japanese homes, quilts are brought out from a closet and spread upon the floor. Within



A JAPANESE BED.

five minutes all is ready for the night, and with the morning light they disappear again. Occasionally, in the larger tea-houses, we, as foreigners, had special luxuries,—such as cotton sheets, a couch of seven comforters, instead of the usual two, and, for a bolster, an extra quilt rolled up as with a shawl-

strap. Thus altogether, including what we used for coverings, our most luxurious couches in Japan consisted of from ten to a dozen comforters.



THE COMMON WASHSTAND IN A TEA-HOUSE.

We found some difficulty in getting suffi-

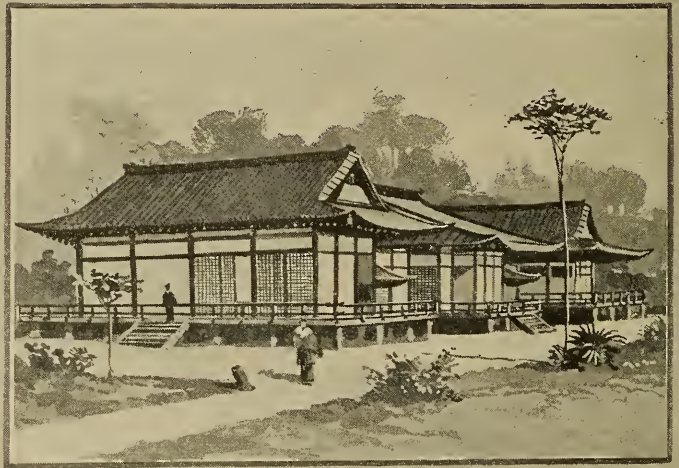
cient sleep in Japanese tea-houses; not from the composition and arrangement of our beds, but from the noise about us,



which seldom ceased before the hour of midnight, and always woke us with the dawn. Even our "summer hotels," with their distressingly thin partitions, are delightfully tranquil compared with the country inns of Japan. For sliding screens of paper are practically no barrier at all to sound, and, as if that were not sufficiently aggravating, these paper walls rarely reach the top of the room, but leave a ventilating space of a foot or two, through which the mingled snoring, prayers, and



CARRYING TEA FROM THE FIELD.



JAPANESE TEA-HOUSE.

conversation of the guests, and the matutinal clatter of the servants, roll and reverberate like distant thunder.

The morning after my arrival, I pushed aside a screen with my forefinger, and lo! half of my room stood open to the rising sun. Descending to the courtyard, I beheld a Japanese servant hurrying toward me on her wooden clogs, to give me tea.

What shall be said of these attractive little waitresses, who make the dullest tea-house gay with laughter, brighten the darkest day with brilliant colors, and sweeten every tea-cup



with a smile? They are not usually beautiful, or even womanly, in the sense of being dignified. They rather seem like well-developed school-girls, just sobered down enough to wear long dresses, but perfectly unable to refrain at times from screams of merriment. Yet search the world through, and where will you find servants such as these? From the first moment when they fall upon their knees and bow their foreheads to the floor, till the last instant, when they troop around the door to call to you their musical word for farewell,—“*Sayonara*,”—they seem to be the daintiest, happiest, and



BRINGING TEA.



PLAYING GAMES.

most obliging specimens of humanity that walk the earth. We were particularly pleased with one agreeable trait of all these Japanese girls—their exquisitely clean and well-shaped hands. One would, of course, expect them to be

small, for delicate frames are a characteristic of the race, but almost without exception the hands of all the waitresses who served us in Japan looked as if they had just emerged from a hot bath, and had been manicured besides. "A trifle," some would say, but, after all, such trifles help to make perfection. When one has traveled through a country for two months, and from one end of it to the other has seen pretty,



TWO MODES OF TRAVEL IN JAPAN.

well-kept hands extended to him fifty times a day, he feels respect and admiration for a race so neat and delicate to their finger-tips. The Japanese, according to our Occidental standard, may not have much godliness, but they possess what comes next to it—personal cleanliness. And I am sure that, at any time, I would rather associate with a nice, wholesome sinner than with an uncleanly saint!

It was while we were taking our breakfast here, that we beheld, in a neighboring room, a lady being served with tea



by her domestic, who was approaching her mistress on her knees. Nothing amazed us more than this, for in the United States these positions are usually reversed.

In free America it is the lady who, figuratively speaking, has to "go down on her knees" before her cook.

When we consider the serious



DOMESTIC ETIQUETTE.

drawbacks to domestic happiness and comfort, occasioned by the insolence and inefficiency of servants in America, who, as a rule, are better lodged, clothed, and fed than any other class of laborers in the world, one questions if in this, and many other respects, Japan will be improved by contact

with the Occident.

What Moscow is to the Russians, Kioto is to the Japanese, their present capital, Tokio, corresponding rather to St. Petersburg. Kioto is the ancient capital,



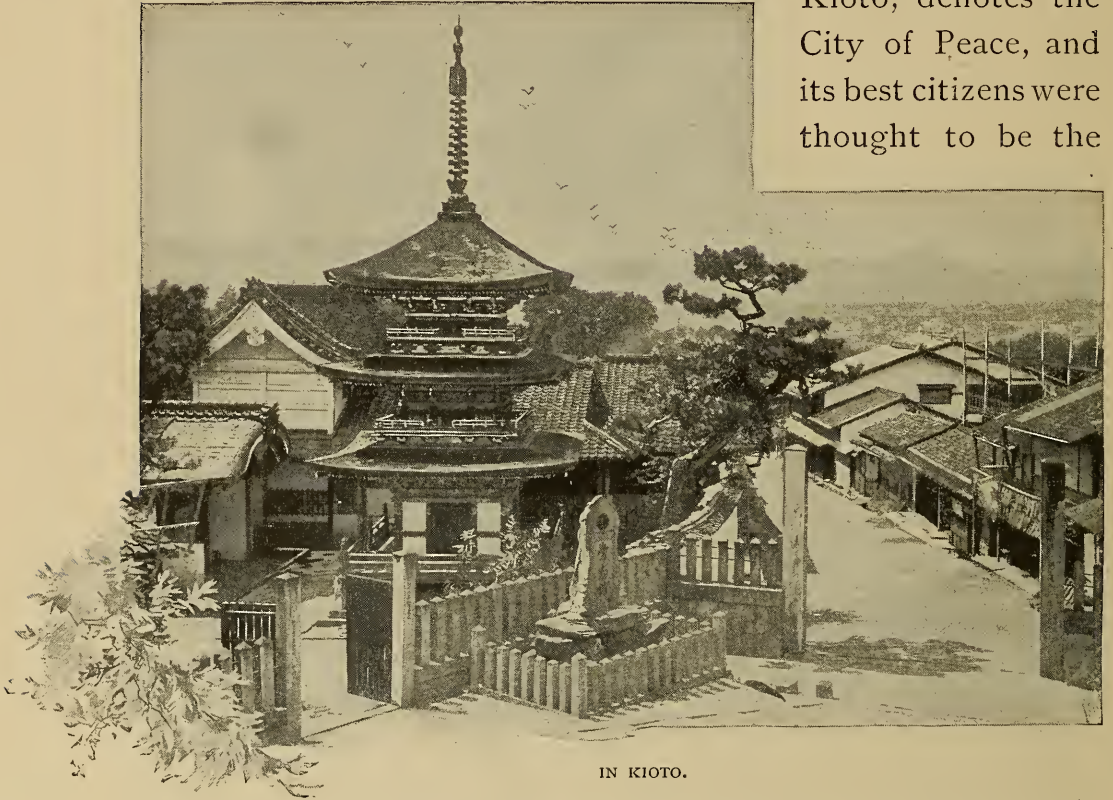
A STREET IN KIOTO.

ital,—the sacred city of the empire,—hallowed by countless shrines and endeared by centuries of classic memories. It



was for a thousand years the home of the Mikado, and is still the centre of old Japanese art. Here also, till the revolution of 1869, lived many nobles of the highest rank, together with distinguished poets, priests, and artists. Its name,

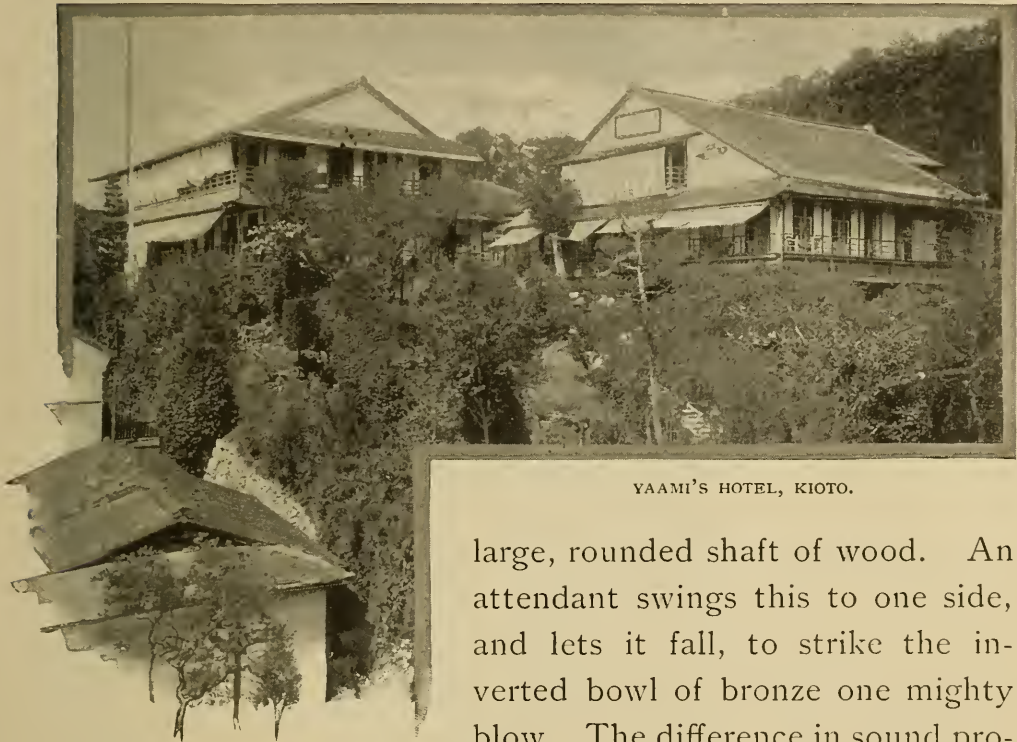
Kioto, denotes the City of Peace, and its best citizens were thought to be the



most refined and polished of a race whose gentle manners are still unsurpassed.

Our hotel in Kioto was unlike the inns of other Japanese cities, being neither a European structure, like the hotels at Tokio and Yokohama, nor yet a tea-house, such as we had lately seen. It was a compromise between the two, with comfortable rooms and foreign furnishings. Its situation is far above the city, upon a wooded hill that has been sacred to Buddha for a thousand years. Around it are old temples, monasteries, and pagodas, among which one can walk in shaded paths the livelong day. Often, while seated on the spacious hotel balcony which overlooks the town, we heard a

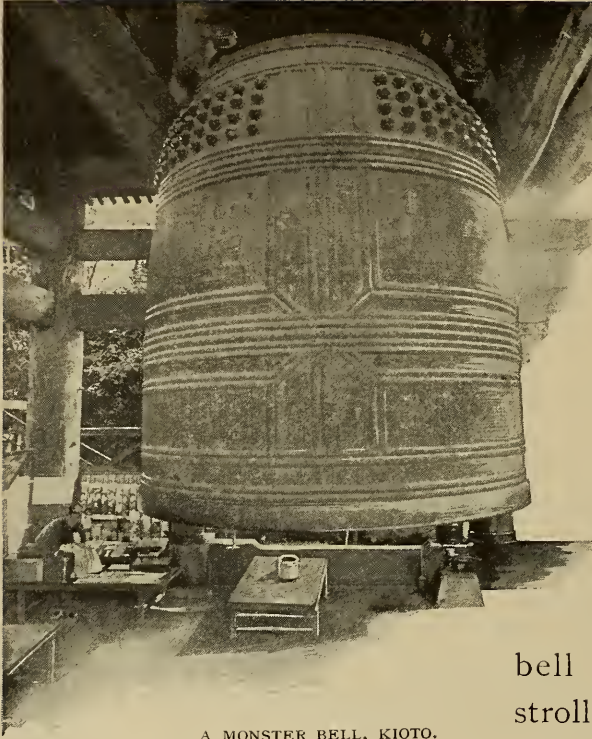
strangely fascinating sound rolling toward us through the sacred groves in solemn, silvery vibrations. We discovered after a short walk the cause of this. It was a huge bronze bell,—no less than seventy-four tons in weight,—whose sweet-voiced call to prayer has echoed over this hill for nearly three hundred years. There are few sounds more pleasing to the ear than the vibrations of a distant, deep-toned bell. Except in Russia I had never heard such notes as those that issue from the bells of old Japan. Their solemn strokes swell through the forest like the crescendo of an orchestra. These bells, however, are not rung, like ours, by wrenching them from side to side, until a pendant tongue falls sharply on their inner rim. Ah, no! the Japanese treat them far more cleverly. Suspended from the belfry roof is a



YAAMI'S HOTEL, KIOTO.

large, rounded shaft of wood. An attendant swings this to one side, and lets it fall, to strike the inverted bowl of bronze one mighty blow. The difference in sound produced by using wood instead of metal, is astonishing. There is no grating jar, no sharpness in the tone, but one stupendous boom of sound, as though a musical cannon were discharged.



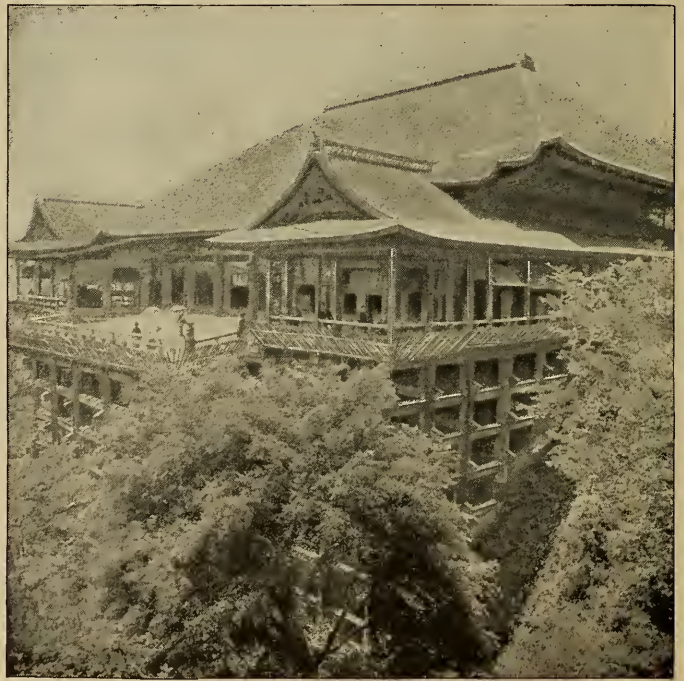


A MONSTER BELL, KIOTO.

This instantly resolves itself into slow-moving, ever widening circles of reverberation, which fall upon the ear more and more faintly, till they die away like the last murmur of the surf upon the sand.

Accepting the invitation which that bell conveyed to us, we strolled toward one of Kioto's many temples. In the

one we entered, five bells, with long white cords attached, were hanging in the lacquered porch. The worshiper pulls one of these, to call the attention of the god; then, having said a prayer, he drops a coin into a grated box and goes his way. On one occasion, we saw a pretty baby, three



A TEMPLE IN KIOTO.





BRONZE HORSE.



months old, brought hither in its mother's arms, and made to pull the bell-rope with its tiny hand. Then the great-grand-mother of the child, herself almost eighty-six years old, advanced with trembling limbs and rang it for the second time. It was a suggestive picture,—this vision of old age and infancy, like opposite poles of an electric battery, completing here a circuit of four generations; pathetic emblems of the



A JAPANESE BELFRY.

past and future,—the smiling infant looking forward to anticipated blessings, the feeble matron thankful for the gifts received.

The Japanese have really two religions, in some respects rivals of each other. The elder, or original faith, is Shintoism; the younger, which has struggled to supplant it for twelve hundred years, is Buddhism.

It is difficult to comprehend exactly what Shintoism is. The name means, literally, "The way of the gods," but it is

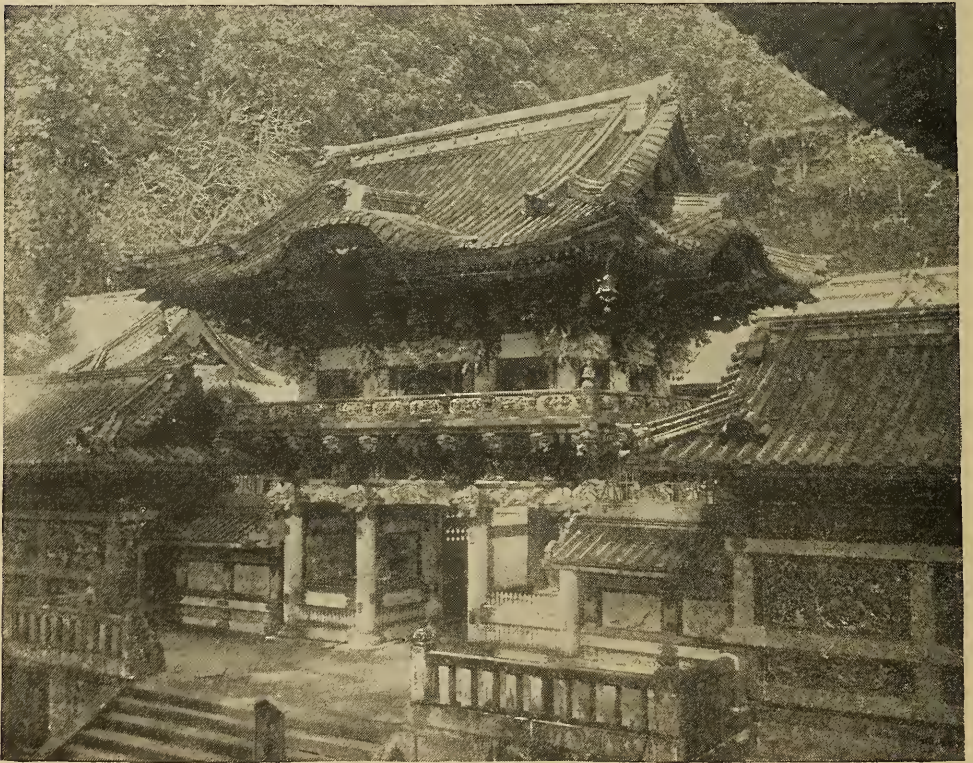




A SHINTO PRIEST.

the vaguest known religion. It has no bible, no dogmas, and not even a moral code. It dimly hints at immortality, but has no definite heaven or hell. Its gods are either deified national heroes or else personifications of nature, such as the glorious sun, the all-surrounding ocean, and the innumerable deities of mountains, rivers, rocks, and trees. Its shrines for worship, with their gray stone lanterns and majestic *torii*, are se-

verely plain, its services extremely simple, and all its priests appear like laymen in the streets, donning their clerical robes



ENTRANCE TO A JAPANESE TEMPLE.



only when they officiate in the temples.

Not so the Buddhist priests. Their costume, like their ritual, is imposing. While Shinto priests may marry, the Buddhists take the vow of celibacy. In fact, though wholly different in its creed from the great Roman Catholic communion, some of the ceremonials of Buddhism remind us of it; such as their richly-mantled priests, their altars bright with candles and adorned with flowers, their clouds of incense, grand processions, and

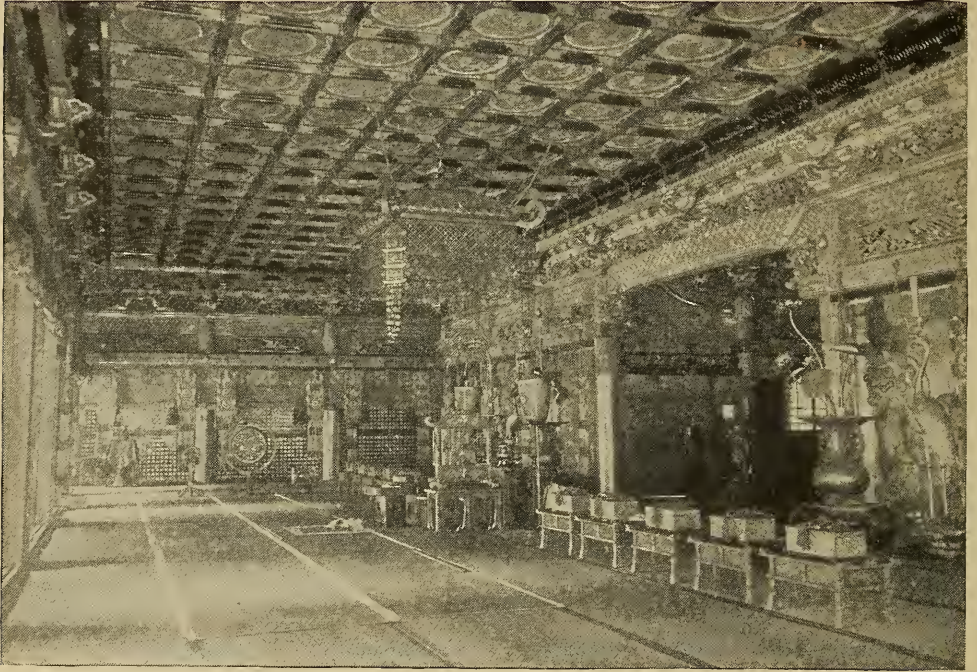


BUDDHIST PRIESTS.



BUDDHIST PRIESTS IN A CEMETERY.

statues of the gods and saints. What wonder, then, since it has such attractions, that this religion, when it came hither from India, about six centuries after Christ, achieved at once a remarkable success? The colder Shinto faith lost ground,



INTERIOR OF A JAPANESE TEMPLE.

and even the Mikados gave to Buddha's doctrines favor and support for centuries; but Shintoism has now once more become the state religion.

The furnishings of the Buddhist temples in Japan are often marvels of artistic beauty, comprising tables, columns, doors, and even floors, composed of ruby red or jet-black lacquer, which is so thick and smooth as to produce the effect of rosewood or solid ebony. Here, too, are altars loaded down with ornaments of gold and bronze, silken screens inscribed with sacred characters, exquisite bronze lanterns, incense-burners, gilded gongs, tall lotus-flowers with leaves of gold, and beautiful lacquered boxes placed on stands about the floor, within which are the precious manuscripts of



Buddhist scriptures. In a word, recall the richest specimens of Japanese art that you have ever seen, and know that with such adornment the finest temples in Japan are filled.

In some of the less important Buddhist shrines, however, "all that glitters is not gold." Some temples are repulsive from their shabby ornaments, hideous idols, and gaudy paper lanterns. Some of their deities are enthroned behind a wooden grating, and worshipers tie to the latter a bit of cloth on which has been inscribed a petition. One such deity, we were assured, has for his special function the assisting of women to obtain good husbands. He is immensely popular. We saw, in half an hour, at least a dozen women knock on the grating to rouse him and entreat his services. One old woman, who evidently knew from experience how rare good husbands are,

led two of her daughters to the gate, and pounded on it savagely three times. Yet even in that temple we found a proof of how the western world has invaded the customs of Japan: for here, amid the grotesque deities, was hung



A BUDDHIST TEMPLE.

an eight-day clock, which proved on examination to have come from Ansonia, Connecticut!

A singular feature of many of these Buddhist temples is a line of votive tablets, erected by pious souls, who wished

either to show by means of pictures the dangers from which God had rescued them, or else to certify, in written words, to miraculous answers to their prayers. The Buddhist religion, however, despite its age and its indubitable hold upon the people, is not to-day, as we have said, the official religion of Japan. Since 1869 the Government has favored Shintoism, and many Buddhist temples have been stripped of their magnificent decorations and dedicated to the Shinto faith.



VOTIVE PICTURES.

Accordingly, the contributions that once came freely from the people are now falling off, and it is difficult to keep in good repair the costly lacquer work and gilding of the temples. Some shrines already look shabby and neglected. How-

ever, an occasional exception to this rule shows how dangerous it is to make unqualified statements about Japan.

In Kioto, for example, we found a most astonishing proof of the vitality of Japanese Buddhism in the new and splendid temple of Higashi Hongwanji, which at the time of our visit was in process of construction. We saw it on the occasion of a special festival, when popular recognition and acclaim were manifested in profuse and elaborate decorations. But, the truth is, the temple is continually receiving the support of untold thousands of the Japanese. All the surrounding





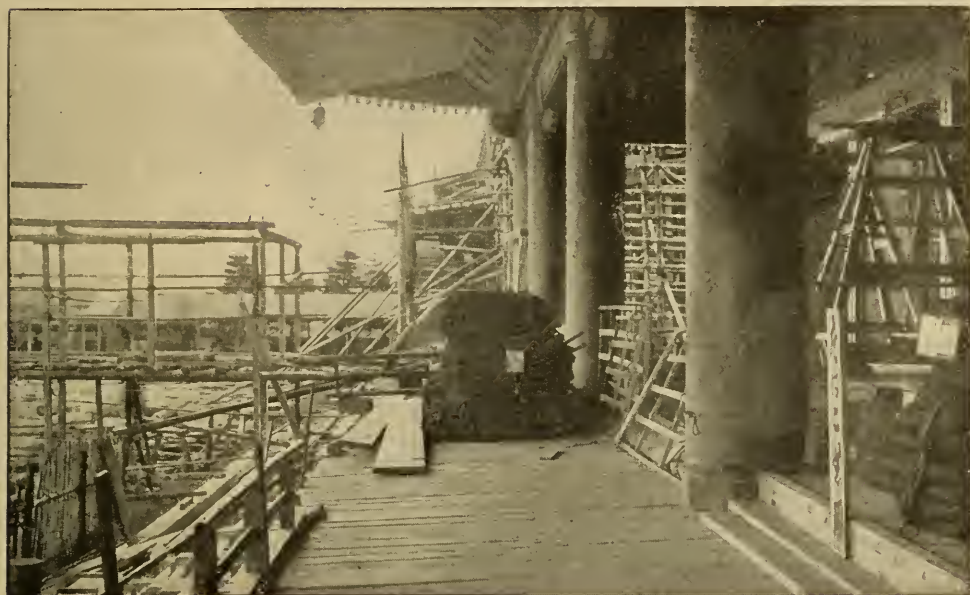
A PYRAMID WITH SILVER CREST.





provinces have given it, not only money, but timber, metals, and stone, besides the transportation of materials free of cost. It seems as if conservative and faithful Buddhists, indignant at the prevalent idea that their religion is declining, were making this stupendous effort to show the world their strength and their devotion.

One object in this shrine especially impressed us. This was a pile of rope,—each strand as long and large as a ship's



NEW BUDDHIST TEMPLE IN KIOTO.

cable,—made of women's hair, twisted and spliced with hemp! These ropes are the offerings of poor but devout women, thousands of whom, in nine Japanese provinces, having nothing else to give, contributed their hair, to be woven into cables for hoisting beams and tiles in the construction of the temple. One rope, two hundred and fifty feet in length, was the gift of three thousand five hundred women in one province alone. This seems at first, perhaps, a trifling thing; but when one recollects the pride which Japanese women take in their abundant hair, the care they show in its arrangement, and the entire absence in Japan of hats or bonnets to conceal

the sacrifice, their action is remarkable. And when we perceived among the usual black strands occasional streaks of white and gray, proving that this enthusiasm extended from youth to age, it seemed to us the most touching proof of popular devotion to a sacred cause that we had ever seen.

We witnessed a number of *matsuris*, or religious festivals in Japan, when all the principal streets were thronged with people, and even the house-tops held their private box-parties.



ROPES OF WOMEN'S HAIR.

On every such occasion there would appear, in the centre of the thoroughfare, an object that never failed to fill us with amazement. Think of a hundred men pulling madly on two ropes, and drawing thus a kind of car, mounted on two enormous wooden wheels.

Resting on this, and rising far above the neighboring roofs, imagine a portable shrine, resembling a pagoda, with roof of gold, and gorgeously decorated with silken tapestries, which are so richly embroidered and heavily gilded as to be valued at many thousands of dollars. This structure had two stories, on each of which were many life-size figures,—some being actual men and women, while others were mere painted statues, hideous and grotesque. Behind this came another car, shaped like a huge bird with crested head. Upon this



second vehicle also stood an edifice, three stories high, resplendent with magnificent tapestries and gilded ornaments, and bearing statues of old Japanese deities, so laughably grotesque, that had not their surroundings been



A RELIGIOUS FESTIVAL.

so rich the whole procession would have seemed a farce. Some of these statues, which were made to open their mouths



A MATSURI.

and wag their heads like puppets, were especially applauded. Men, women, and children rode upon these cars, blowing horns and beating drums. If we had closed our eyes, we might have thought that we were listening to a

Fourth of July parade of the "Antiques and Horribles." What most impressed us was the absence of what we should consider religious feeling. It was a show, a brilliant pageant—nothing more; though, as such, it was heartily enjoyed by thousands.



A CHARACTERISTIC STREET.

(The streets in Kioto,) like those of most Japanese cities, are usually much alike. No heavy teams disturb their rounded surfaces. Few vehicles, save light jinrikishas, pass over them. Almost no animals are ever seen in them. They are as clean as sidewalks are with us. In most of them we can perceive some groups or individuals, arrayed in varied colors, moving about like brilliant fragments in a long kaleidoscope. On either side extends a line of little houses, which, in point of architectural effect, appear monotonous, but since their lower stories are all open to the street, and from the fact that most of them are shops with all their goods on exhibition two feet from the thoroughfare, they really offer infinite variety.

Approaching one of these shops, one first encounters a wooden platform, two feet from the ground. On this the



Japanese purchaser usually seats himself, as he prepares to bargain. Most foreigners, however, being unable to fold comfortably their limbs beneath them for a cushion, assume a different attitude, and allow their feet to hang over the side. If they ascend the platform and really enter the shop, they are supposed to leave their shoes below, and walk in stocking feet; for the shops of the Japanese are, like their houses, paved with polished wood or covered with spotless matting. The goods displayed by no means constitute the merchant's entire stock. The choicest articles are often in a fire-proof store-house, close at hand, and can be sent for at a moment's notice. As for the contents of these street bazaars, they



STYLES OF JAPANESE SANDALS.

comprise every article of clothing, ornament, and furniture conceivable by the Japanese mind.

The shoe shops in particular were, at first, a source of great surprise to us. "These surely are not shoes," we said,





SHOPPING MADE EASY.

European dress, wears in the house a cotton sock, which has a separate compartment for the great toe, like the thumb of a mitten. When he walks out, he plants his foot on a straw sandal, or, if the streets be muddy, on a wooden clog that rises three inches from the ground. In doing so, he thrusts the apex of a V-shaped cord between his great toe and the smaller ones, and, holding on his sandals thus, he marches off.

But not all the merchants of Kioto are content to stay in shops; and, in this respect, human nature is much the same the world over. The gorgeous vehicles



A FLOWER MERCHANT.

as we beheld their great variety of foot-coverings. And yet the Japanese are shod, though sandals is a better name than shoes, for what they wear. A Japanese gentleman, who has not yet adopted



JAPANESE HANDIWORK.





of American country peddlers, which we admired in our childhood days, are reproduced here on a smaller scale, though without wheels; and as the Japanese are sure to be artistic in everything, we were not surprised to find their brooms and dusters grouped in clusters like a huge bouquet. The peddlers themselves are pictures of human placidity. It is true, their eyes will open somewhat at the sight of foreigners, but most of the beardless faces that one sees beneath their mushroom hats of straw might easily serve an artist as models for a Japanese grandmother.

In strolling through the streets, we often paused to watch the natives at their work. If, for example, it chanced to be a cobbler making wooden clogs, we saw, to our astonishment, that his great



MAKING CLOGS.

toe could hold a block of wood as firmly as a thumb, and we began to ask ourselves if western workmen had gained much by covering up the feet and losing a third hand. The methods of Japanese laborers seem to us, at first, a little clumsy, because they are unlike our own. But one soon comes to marvel at their skill. No nation is superior to them in dexterity, fineness of touch, and delicacy of finish. In great things, as in small, one finds the same perfection. Japanese carpenters, for example, will use few nails in building a house, but they will make mortises so exact that water cannot



CHILD AND NURSE.

penetrate between the joints; and they will decorate a fan or paint a photographic slide with touches so delicate that they will bear inspection with a magnifying-glass. To watch them is like watching our own motions in a mirror, for everything appears reversed. Our carpenters push the plane from them; the Japanese pull it toward them. The threads of our screws turn to the right; theirs turn to the left. Our keys turn outward; theirs turn inward. Nor is this difference true of handicraft alone. Their way of doing hundreds of familiar things is so directly opposite to ours, that one is almost tempted to believe

the cause to be their relative position on the other side of the globe, and that they are really living upside down. The only question is: "Which side is up, and which is down?"

The Japanese think our ways just as strange as we do theirs. We, for example, carry our babies in our arms; in Japan, however, they are strapped on the backs of children not much larger than themselves, their little heads being



JAPANESE CARPENTERS.

left to flop about like flowers half-broken from the stem. Nor is this custom the exception. It is the universal rule, alike in city streets and country lanes. Whole pages could be filled in mentioning points of difference between Japanese and European customs. Thus, we stand erect before distinguished men, in token of respect; the Japanese, on the contrary, sit down. We take off our hats when we enter a house, while they remove their shoes. Our books begin at the left; theirs at the right; and if they have any "foot-notes," they are placed at the top of the page. We write across a sheet of paper horizontally; they write vertically down the page, like we make a column of figures. Our color for mourning is black; theirs is



MAT-MAKERS.

white. The best rooms in our houses are in front; theirs are in the rear. We mount our horses from the left; they from the right. We put a horse head foremost into a stall; they back him in and fasten him in the front. On seeing this, we laughingly recalled the showman's trick of getting people to "come and see a horse's head where his tail should be."

But if the Japanese are proficient in the ordinary industries of life, what shall be said of those finer proofs of their artistic skill which charm the world? At first, the foreigner hardly comprehends the value of their work or the amount of





CLOISONNÉ VASES.

time and labor it has cost. Their articles of *cloisonné* are unsurpassed. In everything relating to handicraft in bronze the Japanese are unexcelled. Their flowered lacquer-work, also, with figures raised in gold, has been perfected for a thousand years; while in the realm of silk embroidery and gold brocade the Japanese have been said to paint with the needle as other artists do with the brush. In brief, they have produced among

themselves and for themselves, for centuries, unnumbered masterpieces of artistic excellence, and this without a particle of outside help save that which came to them originally from China. Not, therefore, as uncultured mendicants have they appeared upon the threshold of the western world; but rather



ONE OF JAPAN'S HUGE BELLS.

as people who, while accepting much that we have gained, have also not a little of value to impart. Hence they are a nation that elicits, not merely interest and astonishment, but also admiration and respect.

There is a fascination in watching a Japanese artist engaged in *cloisonné* work. Taking a copper vase, he traces on its surface certain figures, such as flowers, birds, and trees. Then, from a roll of brass, one-sixteenth of an inch in



"IN THE GLOAMING."

breadth, he cuts off tiny pieces which, with consummate skill, and by eye-measurement alone, he twists into a mass of lines which correspond exactly to the figures he has drawn. Holding these bits of brass between the points of tweezers, he touches them with glue, and deftly locates them upon the rounded surface of the vase. At length, when all the figures are outlined, as it were, in skeleton, the flesh has to be applied. In other words, the thousands of interstices between the lines of brass are filled up with enamel of all shades and colors. When this is done the jar is put into a furnace, then





A SERENADE.

touched with more enamel, then fired again, and so on, till it has been brought to the required degree of artistic finish. Then it is polished with great care, until the shining edges of the brass show through the enamel like

the veins of a leaf. The colors also, by this time, are perfectly distinct and permanent, and the entire work stands forth,—a marvelous combination of delicacy, strength, and beauty.

The scene, at evening, on the river-bank at Kioto is charming. Along the water's edge are numerous little tea-houses, in front of which are many wooden piers. These are divided off into little squares, like private boxes in a theatre, and in them groups of Japanese are seated,—smoking, or taking



A WAYSIDE MONUMENT.



supper in the open air. Meantime, a thousand colored lanterns gleam like fireflies on either shore and fleck the river with a dust of gold.

One cannot, however, praise the music which is here produced. It would be highly amusing, if one were deaf; but when one's hearing is acute, a little of such music goes a long way. None of the most enthusiastic admirers of the Japanese has dared, as yet, to praise their music. To Occidental ears the twanging of their banjo strings, and, above



PRIESTLY MUSICIANS.

all, their caterwaulings, are positive torture. And yet, it must be said that to the Japanese our music seemed at first no less absurd than theirs to us. At the first opera given in Tokio by a European company, the Japanese audience was convulsed with laughter, and when the prima donna sang her highest notes, some men and women could no longer control themselves, and were seen stuffing their handkerchiefs into their mouths to avoid uttering shrieks of merriment.

In the immediate vicinity of Kioto is a bamboo grove possessing an extent and beauty unusual even in Japan, where the plant grows luxuriantly. The various ways in

which the Japanese use the bamboo stalk afforded us continual amusement and surprise, while it challenged admiration for their ingenuity. Bridges and scaffolding supports, water-pipes and fences, furniture, umbrellas, baskets, fans, hats, pipe-stems, sandals, screens, and walking-sticks,—are all con-



BAMBOO GROVE NEAR KIOTO.

structed from that jointed, hollow stem, which looks so light and delicate, yet in reality is strong and durable. A thing of beauty and utility, the bamboo is certainly one of the greatest blessings that Nature has bestowed upon her children in the Land of the Rising Sun.

A pretty sight in traveling through the province of Uji, near Kioto, are its tea-plantations, consisting of acres of



evergreen bushes, two or three feet high. Among these move and sparkle in the sun odd bits of color, which prove to be the scanty robes of women and children crouching among the plants and picking their leaves. Most of these tea-plants are left unsheltered from the sun and storm, but the more valuable shrubs, producing tea worth six or seven dollars a pound, are covered by a trellis of bamboo, on which straw mats are placed. Sometimes the floor of an entire valley will be concealed beneath

these mattings, which resemble a gigantic tent.

It is a curious fact that, unlike teas from India and China, Japanese tea must not be made with boiling water, as that gives it a bitter flavor. Indeed, the finer the quality of the



A TEA-PLANTATION.

tea the cooler must be the water. Tea is the national beverage of Japan, and has been largely used there for nearly a thousand years. The Japanese hotels are known as "tea-houses," which correspond also to the *cafés* of Europe. The *cha-no-yu*, or fashionable ceremony of serving and drinking tea, has been for seven hundred years a national institution, governed by the minutest etiquette, each action and each gesture being regulated by a code of rules. It is said to have originated in a formal style of tea-drinking among the Buddhist priests, who found the beverage an easy means



of keeping themselves awake during their nocturnal vigils. Japan may be said, therefore, not only to owe the introduction of the tea-plant to a celebrated Buddhist saint, who imported it from China, but for her elaborate ceremony of tea-drinking to be still further indebted to the priests of Buddhism.

While walking one day in Kioto, we met a fellow-passenger from Vancouver.



TEA-PICKERS.

“What places have you visited?” he asked.

We told him.

“Have you not been to Haruna, beyond Ikao?” he inquired.

“No,” we replied. “We thought of going there, but finally decided to omit it.”

“You made a great mistake!” he cried. “Why not retrace your steps and go there now? It is not too late.”

“That means,” we said, “in all, six hundred miles of extra travel.”

"No matter," he insisted. "You had better do it."

"Are you quite serious?"

"Not only serious, but enthusiastic. You will never regret it. Go!"

We followed his advice, and a few days later, one afternoon in late October,

we found ourselves almost the only guests in a well-kept tea-house in Ikao. Swift 'rikisha men had brought us hither from the railway station, sixteen miles away. The air was most exhilarating, for we were three thousand feet above the



SACRED ROCKS AND TREES.



IKAO.

sea, which we had left eight hours before at Yokohama. Around us on all sides were lofty mountains, whose hidden treasures could not be explored in jinrikishas, for this was another point where all



roads terminate, and only paths lead inward to the fabled homes of mountain deities.

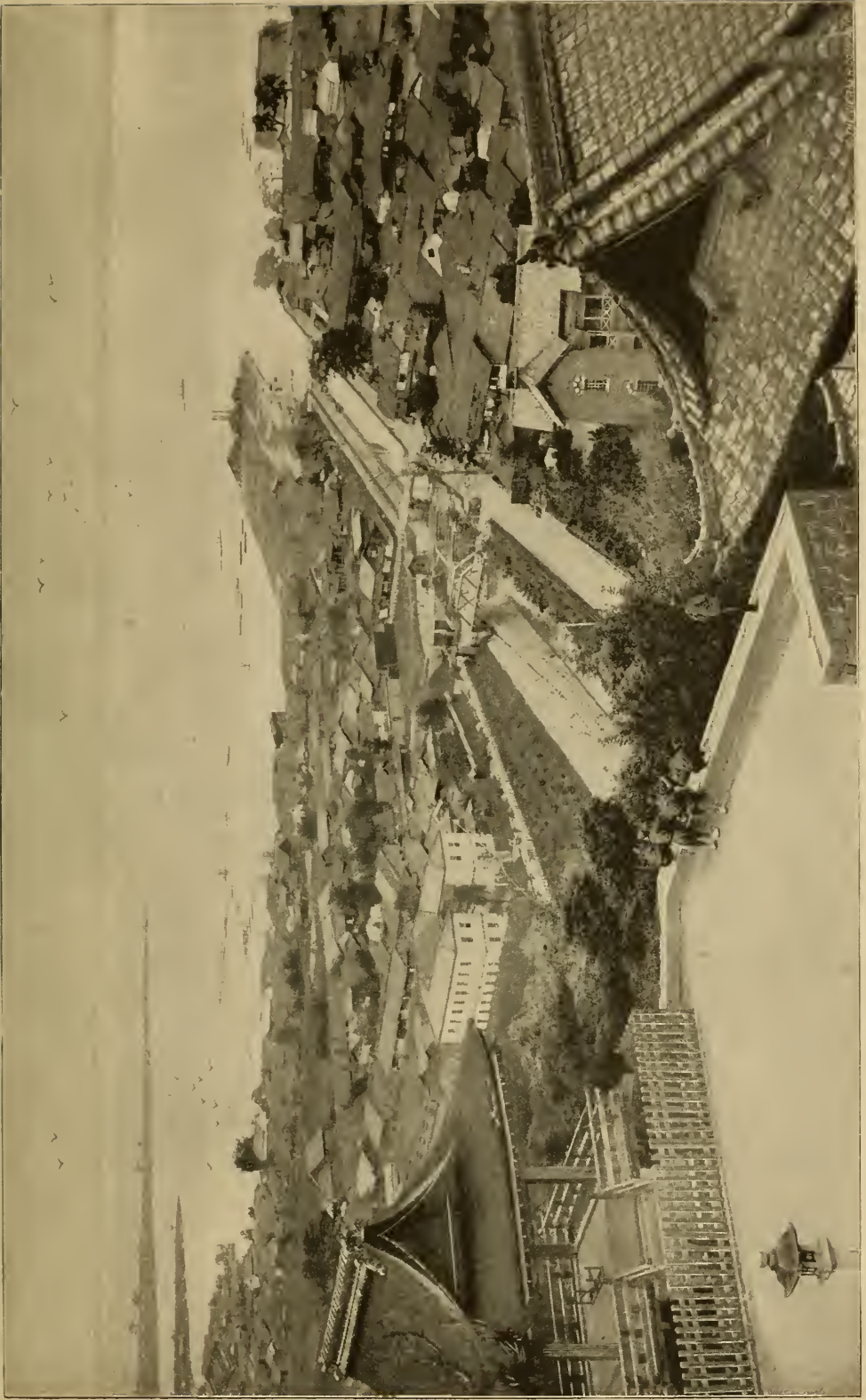
It was four o'clock the next morning when we started. It was still dark. The stars were glorious. We knew the coming day would be superb. It was as yet too cold for riding, so, followed by our kago-bearers, we set forth on foot. For some time we walked on in silence, enraptured with the



THE PATH THROUGH THE FOREST.

splendor of the sky. Above us gleamed the Dipper's seven diamond points; Orion's belt hung radiant amid a galaxy of other suns; while, just above a lofty mountain range, flashed with unwonted brilliancy the herald of approaching day. At length the stellar light began to pale. The east became first white, then golden, as the sun advanced, and then there came an hour's scenery that can never be effaced from my memory.



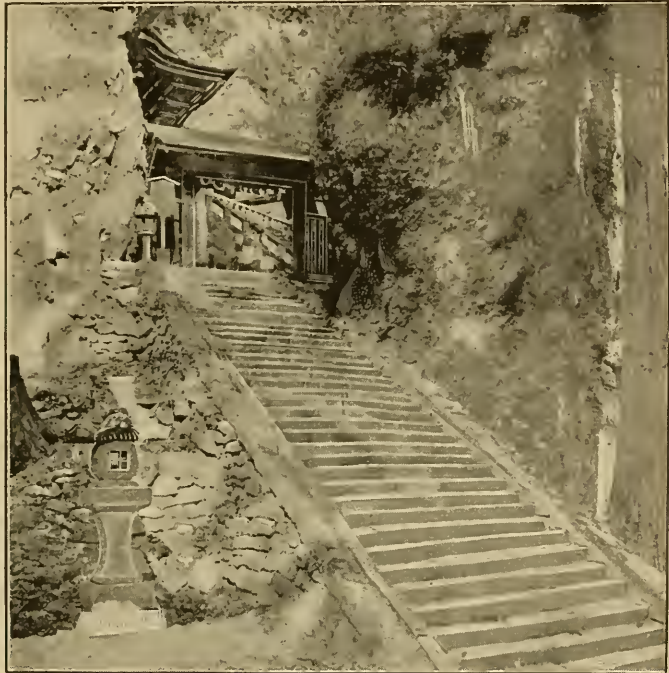


LAKE BIWA.



The colors on the mountains were magnificent. Autumnal foliage mantled them with glory. Thousands of oaks and maples lined the slopes with every shade of orange, red, vermillion, green, and purple. In any light these varied tints would have been beautiful; but to behold them changing into glory, tree by tree, as the first touch of dawn awakened them from sleep, was such a vision as we had never hoped to look upon. Some of this radiant foliage bedecked the ground, and sometimes we walked ankle-deep through multicolored leaves.

Moreover, the pathway was all white with frost, and stretched away in glittering perspective through the trees, like an avenue of silver between mountains of jewels. Intoxicated with



THE STAIRCASE AT HARUNA.

such sights and with the crisp, aromatic air of that October dawn, we walked for miles without fatigue, unable to repress at times our exclamations of enthusiasm.

After a time, we found ourselves at the entrance to a deep ravine, shaded by giant trees, which at that early hour were still unburnished by the sun. In view of the reverence felt by the Japanese for massive rocks and time-gnarled trees, it is not strange that this wild gorge of Haruna has been for ages looked upon as sacred. A feeling of solemnity stole over us. Instinctively we spoke in softer tones. I felt as once before,



when sailing into a Norwegian fjord. It was a place for Dante to describe and for Doré to illustrate.

At length we saw, wedged in between two mighty rocks, a flight of stone steps leading to a lacquered gate. Our Japanese attendant immediately bowed his head, removed his sandals, and knelt down to pray. Nor was this strange. Who could resist, in such a place, the impulse to revere that Power of which these forms of nature were imperfect symbols? At all events, whatever may have been the difference in our creeds, both traveler and native worshiped here that day,—one standing in the forest shade, the other kneeling on the moss-grown steps.

After some moments' silence, our attendant arose and began the ascent.  
 him. On  
 the

We followed  
 passing  
 first



"HUGE CRYPTOMERIAS  
 LIKE THOSE OF NIKKO."

gateway, we perceived another smaller portal, which seemed to lead directly into the cliff. Above it was a rock, a hundred and fifty feet in height, and shaped like a gigantic obelisk. Around it rose huge cryptomerias, like

those of Nikko, wrinkled with age, and solemn in their sanctity and shade. The mountain-side so overhung the place



THE HEART OF OLD JAPAN.

that it seemed kept from falling only by a caprice of nature. We almost feared to speak, lest, like some Alpine avalanche, the monstrous mass might fall and overwhelm us. Finally, however, we passed beneath the second arch; and,



SACRED PORTAL.





lo! before us, on a shelf of rock, completely isolated from the outer world, and guarded by these sentinels of stone, we saw a sacred shrine. Even at that early hour one pilgrim was already here, and, as the radiance of the rising sun stole through the twilight of the holy grove and turned the temple steps to gold, unconscious of the picture he produced, he knelt in prayer.

That scene can never be forgotten. An interval of centuries seemed to separate us from the Japan of Yokohama. No whisper of approaching change had yet penetrated these peaceful solitudes. No earthquake shock of doubt had sent a tremor through this mountain altar. The faith which chose this immemorial forest for its temple still reigned here supreme. And as we stood by this illumined portico, in which a ray of sunlight glittered like a sacred fire, we felt that we had reached the Heart of Old Japan.







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